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THE GERMAN NORTHERN THEATER OF OPERATIONS 1940-1945

BY

EARL F. ZIEMKE

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BY
EARL F. ZIEMKE

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NG: State AG (3).
USAR: USAR Sch (2).
For explanation of abbreviations used, see AR 320–50.

FOREWORD

The Office of the Chief of Military History of the Department of the Army is currently preparing a series of studies on German military operations in World War II against forces other than those of the United States. In addition to the volumes already published dealing with Poland and the Balkans and the present volume on Norway and Finland, these monographs will cover German operations in Russia, France and the Low Countries. These campaign studies are being made available to the General Staff and to the Army schools and colleges as reference works. They will also prove of value to all who are interested in military affairs.

The German campaigns in Norway and Finland established landmarks in the evolution of military science even though they failed in the long run to influence the outcome of the war. In the invasion of Norway the Germans executed the first large-scale amphibious (in fact triphibious) operation of World War II. The subsequent German operations out of Finland provided the first, and still unique, instance of major military forces operating in the Arctic and created a precedent, at least, for the inclusion of that region, once considered almost totally inaccessible, in strategic considerations. In these respects the operations in the German Northern Theater have a direct association with concepts of warfare which have not yet reached their final stage of development and are, therefore, of current and possible future interest.

PREFACE

This volume describes two campaigns that the Germans conducted in their Northern Theater of Operations. The first they launched, on 9 April 1940, against Denmark and Norway. The second they conducted out of Finland in partnership with the Finns against the Soviet Union. The latter campaign began on 22 June 1941 and ended in the winter of 1944–45 after the Finnish Government had sued for peace.

The scene of these campaigns by the end of 1941 stretched from the North Sea to the Arctic Ocean and from Bergen on the west coast of Norway, to Petrozavodsk, the former capital of the Karelo-Finnish Soviet Socialist Republic. It faced east into the Soviet Union on a 700-mile-long front, and west on a 1,300-mile sea frontier. Hitler regarded this theater as the keystone of his empire, and, after 1941, maintained in it two armies totaling over a half million men.

In spite of its vast area and the effort and worry which Hitler lavished on it, the Northern Theater throughout most of the war constituted something of a military backwater. The major operations which took place in the theater were overshadowed by events on other fronts, and public attention focused on the theaters in which the strategically decisive operations were expected to take place. Remoteness, German security measures, and the Russians' well-known penchant for secrecy combined to keep information concerning the Northern Theater down to a mere trickle, much of that inaccurate. Since the war, through official and private publications, a great deal more has become known. The present volume is based in the main on the greatest remaining source of unexploited information, the captured German military and naval records. In addition a number of the participants on the German side have very generously contributed from their personal knowledge and experience.

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PART ONE

THE CAMPAIGNS IN NORWAY AND DENMARK

Chapter 1

The Background of German Operations in Norway and Denmark

The Scandinavian Dilemma

Once, in the Dark Ages, the Norsemen had been the terror of the European coasts, and their search for plunder had carried them east to Byzantium and into the interior of Russia. In the eleventh century Cnut the Great of Denmark ruled England and Norway. Later, for a time, the Danes united all of Scandinavia under their crown. Under Gustavus Adolphus, a military genius who created the world's first modern army, Sweden became a Great Power and brought the entire eastern shore of the Baltic Sea under its control.

By the nineteenth century those glories had dimmed and faded. Sweden lost Finland to the Russian Czar in 1809; and a few years later, as a consequence of its alliance with Napoleon, Denmark was forced to give up Norway which, until 1905, was joined to Sweden in an uneasy personal union under the Swedish king. With practical good sense, the Scandinavian countries then turned their energies to internal affairs and, except for a short war which Denmark lost to the German Confederation in 1866, resolutely avoided military entanglements. After the turn of the century they watched with growing concern as tension built up in Europe, and in December 1912 they formulated a set of rules for neutrality in an attempt to create a legal basis for the position they hoped to maintain in case of war.

For Scandinavia the most fateful aspect of the approaching conflict was the rising enmity between Great Britain and Germany. In a war between the great sea power and the great land power the Scandinavian states would occupy the middle ground, no comfortable spot for neutrals. Whatever course they took promised to be hazardous and might end in disaster.

In World War I it was still possible to strike a balance. The Norwegian and Swedish merchant fleets were pressed into Allied service.

On the other hand, the largest share of Swedish industrial production and of the iron ore from the Kiruna–Gällivare fields went to Germany, and German pressure forced Denmark to mine sections of the Great Belt to protect the German naval base at Kiel. In August 1918 the British compelled Norway to complete the North Sea minefield by mining the waters near Karmöy. Although the cost had been high, the Scandinavian countries emerged from the war more than ever convinced that neutrality had to be the major principle of their foreign policy.

On the eve of World War II it appeared that the pattern of 1914–18 might be repeated; but the Scandinavian position was only superficially the same: there had been important and dangerous changes. In Germany, the Nazi government was both daring and capricious, and militarily it was not tied down on the Continent as the Imperial government had been. The Germans had not forgotten the so-called "hunger blockade" of World War I nor the part Norway had played in it and might be forced to play again. The German Navy's poor showing during World War I still rankled, and a favorite theory was that the war at sea would have gone differently had the German Fleet been able to operate from bases outside the land-locked North Sea, bases, for instance, on the west coast of Norway. Most significant of all, as long as the Lorraine mines stayed in French hands, the German war machine was absolutely dependent on Swedish iron ore. During the warmer months the ore could be shipped through the Swedish port of Luleå on the Baltic Sea; but in winter, when ice closed the Baltic ports, the ore had to be loaded at Narvik on the Norwegian Atlantic coast. To reach Narvik in wartime the German ore ships had to use the Leads, the protected channel between the Norwegian coast and its tight fringe of offshore islands. Also, German blockade runners could take cover in the Leads and break out into the open ocean anywhere along the Norwegian coast. These were facts which had not escaped the Allies, particularly the British who were not prepared to take the offensive anywhere except at sea and saw in economic warfare a chance to avoid a second bloodletting on the scale of World War I.

On 1 September 1939 the German Foreign Ministry instructed its ministers in Norway, Sweden, and Finland to inform those governments "in clear, but decidedly friendly, terms" that Germany intended to respect their integrity—in so far as they maintained strict neutrality—but would not tolerate breaches of that neutrality by third parties. It had made a similar declaration to the Danish Government a week earlier. During the next week Ambassador Ulrich von Hassell visited the Scandinavian and Finnish capitals where he repeated the German assurances and warned the governments against accepting any restrictions imposed from the outside on their trade with Germany.[1] The

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[1] U.S. Department of State, *Documents on German Foreign Policy, 1918–1945* (Washington, 1956), Series D, Vol. VII, pp. 392, 396–98, 502, 522, 541.

German statements to the Scandinavian governments were essentially the same as those made to the other European neutrals at the same time. The British Government had already considered a more positive approach. A week before the outbreak of war the Foreign Office had proposed intimating to the Norwegian Government that a German attack on Norway would be regarded as tantamount to an attack on Great Britain. But the communication finally sent was watered down to a promise that the British would consider it in their interest to come to Norway's assistance if Norway incurred German reprisals by showing benevolence toward the Allies in the matter of the ore traffic.[2]

A Siege of Britain

In the third week of September 1939 the German conquest of Poland was nearly completed. The Russians were marching in from the east, and the remnants of the Polish Army were being wiped out at Warsaw, Modlin, and L'vov. Great Britain and France had declared war, but they displayed no inclination to take the offensive. Contrary to the widely held belief that Hitler was following a detailed war plan, the Germans themselves had no clear idea of what to do next. During a conference with Hitler on 23 September, Grossadmiral Erich Raeder, Commander in Chief, Navy, raised the question of measures to be adopted "in case" the war against Great Britain and France had to be fought to the finish. The possibility of unrestricted submarine warfare, to be proclaimed as "a siege of Britain," came under consideration; but Hitler had not yet made up his mind. He still hoped "to drive a wedge" between Great Britain and France.[3]

On 27 September, the day Warsaw and Modlin surrendered, Hitler called the commanders in chief of the three services to the Reich Chancellery and informed them that he intended to open an offensive in the west as soon as possible, certainly before the end of the year.[4] The announcement, bombshell though it was, was received with some skepticism. It was not the first time Hitler had given too free a rein to his imagination; moreover, the prospects of peace with the Allies appeared good, and Hitler had committed himself to making an offer (which he did in the Reichstag speech of 6 October). Within two days the Army had mustered a half dozen compelling arguments against a campaign in the west, which it regarded as technically impossible before the turn of the year and unpromising, if not dangerous, at any time in the foreseeable future.[5] The following weeks of doubt and uncertainty brought a flurry of estimates, proposals, and counterproposals from the Armed Forces High Command (*Oberkommando der Wehrmacht*—OKW) and the service commands—Army High Command (*Oberkommando des Heeres*—OKH), Navy High Command (*Oberkommando der Kriegsmarine*—OKM), and Air Force High Command (*Oberkommando der Luftwaffe*—OKL).[6]

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[2] J. R. M. Butler, *Grand Strategy* (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1957), Vol. II, p. 93.

[3] *Fuehrer Conferences on Matters Dealing With the German Navy* (Washington, 1947) (hereafter cited as *Fuehrer Conferences*), 1939, p. 9.

[4] Helmuth Greiner, *Die Feldzuege gegen die Westmaechte und im Norden*, pp. 1–10. MS # C–065d. OCMH.

[5] Franz Halder, *Kriegstagebuch des Generalobersten Franz Halder* (hereafter cited as *Halder Diary*), Vol. II, p. 16. *War Diary, German Naval Staff, Operations Division, Part A* (Washington, 1948) (hereafter cited as *Naval War Diary*), Vol. 2, p. 40.

In a Naval Staff Conference on 2 October Raeder presented a list of three possibilities for future operations which he had received from the Chief, OKW:

1. Attempt a decision by operations on land in the west. Concentrate the entire armament industry and war economy on the Army and Air Force.
2. Attempt a decision by the "siege of Britain." Concentrate efforts on the most speedy and large-scale expansion of the submarine arm and of the aircraft types required for warfare against Britain. On land: defense in the west.
3. Defense at sea and on land; delaying tactics.[7]

As Chief, Naval Staff, Raeder expressed the belief that the most effective means to accomplish the defeat of the main enemy, Great Britain, was the "siege of Britain," and he ordered supporting considerations drawn up.[8]

Since, according to the generals, the future of land operations was doubtful, it looked as if the "siege of Britain" might move into the forefront of German strategy. While Raeder obviously welcomed such a development, he had to recognize that the Navy was far from ready to carry out the greatly expanded mission that would fall to it. In the first place, the Submarine Command had only 29 Atlantic-type U-boats.[9] Secondly, the Navy was not in a favorable position to assume the offensive outside the North Sea. It had concluded, in the "Battle Instructions" of May 1939, that the English Channel would be completely blocked and that the British would spare no pains to close the northern route out of the North Sea, between the Shetland Islands and Norway.[10] Resolution of the first problem, that of the submarines, was a matter of time; the second, how to achieve freedom of action outside the North Sea, Raeder turned to on 3 October. He told the Naval Staff that he believed it necessary to acquaint the Fuehrer with the considerations in extending the Navy's operational bases to the north. He asked the staff to determine whether German and Soviet diplomatic pressure could be used to acquire bases in Norway, or, if that were not possible, whether the bases could be taken by military force. The investigation was to include a selection of places in Norway which could be used as bases; estimates of the amount of construction needed; and an analysis of how the bases could be defended.[11]

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[6] The German abbreviations OKW, OKH, OKM, and OKL will be used throughout this study. The commanders in chief were Generaloberst Walter von Brauchitsch, Army; Grossadmiral Erich Raeder, Navy; and Generalfeldmarschall Hermann Goering, Air Force. The OKW, headed by the Chief, OKW, Generaloberst Wilhelm Keitel, was not organized as a true armed forces command but functioned mainly as a coordinating agency and personal military staff for Hitler, who in February 1938 had assumed command of the German Armed Forces as Supreme Commander (*Oberste Befehlshaber*). The most important of the several sections in the OKW was the Armed Forces Operations Staff (*Wehrmachtfuehrungsstab*) under Generalmajor Alfred Jodl, who in the course of the war became Hitler's closest military adviser.

[7] *Naval War Diary,* Vol. 2, p. 9.

[8] Raeder was both Commander in Chief, Navy, and Chief, Naval Staff.

[9] *Naval War Diary,* Vol. 2, p. 19.

[10] Battle Instructions for the Navy (Edition of May 1939), in *Fuehrer Directives and Other Top-Level Directives of the German Armed Forces, 1939–1941* (Washington, 1948), p. 25.

Raeder was thinking in terms of two bases, one at Narvik and the other at Trondheim. Admiral Rolf Carls, Commanding Admiral, Baltic Sea Station, thought a base at Narvik was not necessary, apparently because Germany already had the use of the Soviet arctic port of Murmansk.[12] (In mid-October 1939 Germany acquired a separate base, Base North, in Zapadnaya Litsa Bay on the Murman Coast.) Konteradmiral Karl Doenitz, Commanding Admiral, Submarines, considered both Narvik and Trondheim suitable as submarine bases and recommended that Trondheim be the main base and Narvik an auxiliary.[13]

On 5 October the Chief of Staff, Naval Staff, Vizeadmiral Otto Schniewind conferred with the Chief of Staff, Army, General der Artillerie Franz Halder on the question whether the proposed bases could be secured and defended. Schniewind pointed out that, if the war against Great Britain had to be fought to the finish, the Navy and Air Force would have to take responsibility for the main effort. He asked, first, whether it would be possible for the Army by operations in the direction of the Channel–Normandy–Brittany to create a broader base for submarine operations. This, Halder replied, was beyond the power of the Army. Asked whether the Army could take the areas in central and northern Norway which had been mentioned as sites for bases, Halder again gave a negative answer, citing the probable opposition of both Norway and Sweden, difficult terrain, bad communications, and long supply lines. He believed a thrust in the west (where he doubted that the coast could be reached at all) or in Norway would require concentration of the entire war industry on Army requirements and bring the submarine program to a halt. An extension of the base, in the direction of Jutland as far as Skagen, could be promised, he thought, but he doubted whether the advantages to the Navy would outweigh the political and economic disadvantages of such an undertaking.[14]

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[11] Trials of the Major War Criminals Before the International Military Tribunal (Nuremberg, 1947) (hereafter cited as International Military Tribunal), Doc. 122–C.

[12] In a memorandum of 30 January 1944 Raeder stated that it was Carls who first called the importance of bases on the Norwegian coast to his attention. After the war, Raeder testified that Carls had also expressed concern over a British occupation of Norway. The naval records contain no evidence to support either of these contentions. International Military Tribunal, Vol. XIV, p. 99, and Doc. 066–C.

[13] International Military Tribunal, Doc. 005–C.

In its own appraisal, set down on 9 October, the Naval Staff was far from enthusiastic. A base on the Norwegian coast, it conceded, would offer great advantages for the fleet which Germany planned to have after 1945; but until then only the submarines could use it profitably. Although a base, Trondheim, for instance, would undeniably be useful for submarine warfare, the length and vulnerability of its lines of communication to Germany would greatly reduce its value. Finally, to acquire such a base by a military operation would be difficult, and, even if political pressure were enough, serious political disadvantages, among them loss of the protection which Norwegian neutrality gave German shipping, would have to be taken into account.[15]

On the day the Naval Staff completed its study Hitler put the finishing touches on a lengthy political and military analysis in which he reaffirmed his intention to launch an offensive in the west. A major objective was to be to secure bases in Holland, Belgium, and—if possible—on the French coast from which the Navy and Air Force could operate against the British Isles.[16] The next day (10 October) Raeder explained to Hitler that the conquest of the Belgian coast (at the time even Hitler believed this would be the limit of the advance) would be of no advantage for submarine warfare and then, mentioning Trondheim as a possibility, pointed out the advantages of bases on the Norwegian coast. Hitler replied that bases close to Britain were essential for the Air Force but agreed to take the question of Norway under consideration.[17]

Fuehrer Directive No. 6, issued on 9 October, placed the German main effort on land. In it Hitler called for an Army offensive on the northern flank of the Western Front, with the objectives of smashing large elements of the French and Allied armies and taking as much territory as possible in Holland, Belgium, and northern France to create favorable conditions for air and sea warfare against Great Britain and for defense of the Ruhr. The Air Force would support the Army operations, and the Navy would "make every effort to support the Army and Air Force directly or indirectly." [18] Of the three services, the Navy was given by far the least important mission. Its direct contribution was to consist of small operations, such as seizure of the West Frisian Islands; and it would give indirect support by employing the submarines and pocket battleships in warfare against Allied merchant shipping "until such time as the siege of Britain can be carried out." [19]

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[14] *Naval War Diary,* Vol. 2, p. 39.

[15] *OKM, SKL, Ueberlegungen zu Frage der Stuetzpunktgewinnung fuer die Nordsee-Kriegfuehrung, 9.10.39.*

[16] *Denkschrift und Richtlinien ueber die Fuehrung des Krieges im Westen, 9.10.39,* in *OKM, Weisungen OKW (Fuehrer).*

[17] *Fuehrer Conferences,* 1939, pp. 13ff.

[18] *Der Oberste Befehlshaber der Wehrmacht, OKW Nr. 172/39, WFA/L, Weisung Nr. 6 fuer die Kampffuehrung, 9.10.39,* in *OKM, Weisungen OKW (Fuehrer).*

The Hitler-Quisling Talks, December 1939

After 10 October Hitler was preoccupied with his plans for the offensive in the west. He showed no further interest in the question of Norwegian bases; and Raeder for the time being did not return to it; but as the Navy prepared to intensify the war against merchant shipping its attention was increasingly drawn toward northern Europe and Norway in particular. If there was one area where Germany could hope to throttle British trade completely it was the Baltic Sea. The Navy had been active there since the outbreak of war but with less success than had been expected. One source of acute concern was the firm, almost hostile, attitude of Sweden which in October and November culminated in a series of running disputes, mostly over alleged Swedish attempts to stretch their neutral rights almost to the point of provocation. Another was the continuing traffic across Sweden to the Norwegian Atlantic ports of goods from the Baltic countries and Finland. The Navy considered it essential to stop that trade, which consisted mainly of lumber to be used as pit props in British coal mines. At the end of October Raeder ordered that submarines be stationed off the north coast of Norway, but the chances of their having any effect were small since it was impossible to determine where ships bound for Britain would depart from the Leads.[20]

On 29 November Fuehrer Directive No. 9 brought the "siege of Britain" to the fore again. Declaring that the most effective way to accomplish the defeat of Great Britain was by paralyzing its economy, Hitler announced that, after the French and British armies had been annihilated in the field and parts of the Channel coast occupied, the German main effort would shift to naval and air warfare against the British economy.[21] Discussing the projected economic warfare at a Fuehrer conference on 8 December, Raeder attempted once more to turn Hitler's attention toward Norway. He pointed out that transport via Sweden and Norway through Trondheim to Britain was very active and difficult to control. It was important, he declared, to occupy Norway; the northern countries could then be forced to route their exports to Germany.[22]

In December Raeder acquired support from a new direction when he came into contact with Vidkun Quisling, leader of the Norwegian National Union Party (Nasjonal Samling)—a small and not very influential copy of the German Nazi Party. Quisling, who had served as Norwegian Minister of War in the early 1930's, claimed to have well-placed contacts in the Norwegian Government and Army. He was convinced that the Soviet Union was the greatest menace to Europe, and before the era of the Nazi-Soviet Pact he had advocated a German-Scandinavian-British bloc to stand off the Bolshevik threat.[23] Quisling's patron in Germany was Reichsleiter Alfred Rosenberg, head of the Foreign Political Office of the Nazi Party. On a visit to Berlin in June 1939, Quisling, talking to Rosenberg, had pictured Norway as split politically between the bourgeois parties—completely under the influence of Great Britain—and the Labor Party—engaged in transforming the country into a Soviet Socialist Republic. He had emphasized the strategic importance of Norway in a war between Germany and Great Britain and the advantages that would accrue to the power gaining control of the Norwegian coast.[24] On the assumption that the Norwegian question would be of great significance for air operations, Rosenberg had secured an interview for Quisling in the Air Ministry. Subsequently, in August 1939, a group of Quisling's followers had been given a short training course by the Rosenberg organization. In September the Air Ministry had indicated willingness to take over financial support of Quisling, but the decision had been postponed during the Polish Campaign. Further urging by Rosenberg had brought no results.[25]

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[19] *Naval War Diary,* Vol. 2, p. 70.

[20] *Naval War Diary,* Vols. 2 and 3 *passim.*

[21] *Der Oberste Befehlshaber der Wehrmacht, OKW/WFA Nr. 215/39, Weisung Nr. 9, Richtlinien fuer die Kriegfuehrung gegen die feindliche Wirtschaft, 29.11.39,* in *OKM, Weisungen OKW (Fuehrer).*

[22] *Fuehrer Conferences,* 1939, p. 46.

In December Quisling made a second trip to Berlin, where, at first, he found little encouragement. Rosenberg, who reported Quisling's presence to Hitler and briefly outlined his proposal to pave the way for a German occupation by establishing a pro-German government in Norway, was content with an explanation that "naturally" Hitler could not receive Quisling and a halfhearted promise to look into the matter further.[26] At the Foreign Ministry, Quisling's known antipathy for the Soviet Union gained him a cold reception. The officials he talked to there wanted only to bundle him off to Norway again as quickly as they could. But, on 11 December, Wiljam Hagelin, a Norwegian businessman who acted as Quisling's liaison man in Germany, introduced him to Raeder, who proved to be an interested listener. Leaving Russia somewhat in the background, Quisling chose as his theme the pro-British bias of the Norwegian Government and the danger of a British occupation. The Government, he claimed, had secretly agreed not to oppose a British invasion if Norway became involved in war with one of the other Great Powers. The National Union Party, he said, wanted to forestall a British move by placing the necessary bases at the disposal of the German armed forces. In the coastal areas men in important positions had already been bought for that purpose, but the months of unproductive negotiations with Rosenberg demonstrated that a change in the German attitude was necessary.[27]

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[23] U.S. Department of State. *Documents on German Foreign Policy, 1918–1945* (Washington, 1954), Series D, Vol. VIII, p. 56.

[24] Rosenberg, *Die politische Vorbereitung der Norwegen-Aktion, 15 Juni 1940.* EAP 250–d–18–42/2. Reichsamtsleiter Scheidt, *Aktenvermerk fuer Reichsleiter Rosenberg. Betr: Besuch des ehem. Kriegsministers, Staatsrat Quisling, 14 Juni 1939.* EAP 250–d–18–42/4.

[25] Rosenberg, *Die politische Vorbereitung der Norwegen Aktion, 15 Juni 1940.* EAP 250–d–18–42/2.

[26] Hans-Guenther Seraphim, *Das politische Tagebuch Alfred Rosenbergs aus den Jahren 1934/35 und 1939/40* (Goettingen: Musterschmidt-Verlag, 1956), p. 91.

What Quisling had to say fitted in neatly with a line of thought Raeder had recently been following. On 25 November he had told the Naval Staff that he saw a danger that, in the event of a German invasion of Holland, the British might make a surprise landing on the Norwegian coast and take possession of a base there. He had requested that further thought be given to the matter.[28]

Reporting to Hitler on 12 December, Raeder gave an account of his meeting with Quisling and added a summary of his own and the Naval Staff's thinking on the subject of a British or German occupation of Norway. To permit the British to establish themselves in Norway, he said, would be intolerable because Sweden would then fall entirely under British influence, the war would be carried to the Baltic, and German naval warfare would be completely disrupted in the Atlantic and the North Sea. On the other hand, a German occupation of bases in Norway would provoke strong British countermeasures aimed at interdicting the transport of ore from Narvik. That eventually, Raeder admitted, would remain a weak spot; but he recommended that, if Hitler's impression of Quisling was favorable, the OKW be given permission to use him as a collaborator in preparing plans for an occupation of Norway either by peaceful means—that is, by German troops being called in—or by force.[29]

During the next week Hitler saw Quisling twice. After the first meeting, on 14 December, he instructed the OKW to "investigate how one can take possession of Norway." [30] At the second interview, on 18 December, as he had at the first, Hitler expressed a personal desire to preserve Norway's neutrality. But, he stated, if the enemy prepared to extend the war, he would be obliged to take countermeasures. He promised financial support for Quisling's party and gave control of political arrangements to Rosenberg. A special staff in the OKW was to handle military matters.[31]

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[27] *Fuehrer Conferences,* 1939, p. 56.

[28] *Naval War Diary,* Vol. 3, p. 155.

[29] *Fuehrer Conferences,* 1939, p. 54.

[30] The date, 13 December, given in the *Jodl Diary,* is apparently in error. In the *Akten Raeder, ObdM, Heft I* at the bottom of a 13 December letter from Rosenberg, explaining that he could not take Quisling to see Hitler that day, Raeder noted, *"14.XII.39. . . . Empfang von Q. und H. durch F. Raeder 14.XII.39." Tagebuch General Jodl (WFA),* International Military Tribunal, Docs, 1809–PS and 1811–PS (unpublished documents in National Archives) (hereafter cited as *Jodl Diary*), 13 Dec 39.

[31] Rosenberg, *Die politische Vorbereitung der Norwegen Aktion, 15 Juni 1940.* EAP 250–d–18–42/2.

Hitler's interest in Norway was sudden and, as was soon shown, still superficial, but events were conspiring to draw him closer to Raeder's point of view. In October Hitler had said that, barring completely unforeseen developments, the neutrality of the northern states could be assumed for the future.[32] When he addressed the generals, on 23 November, his opinion had changed somewhat. He described Scandinavia as hostile to Germany because of Marxist influences "but neutral now." [33] At the end of November the Soviet attack on Finland had injected a new and potentially dangerous element into the situation. The Soviet aggression aroused immediate sympathy for Finland among the Allies and in the Scandinavian countries, but Germany, bound by the Nazi-Soviet Pact in which Finland had been declared outside the German sphere of interest, was forced to resort to strict neutrality. As a result, anti-German sentiment in Scandinavia, which had been growing since the start of the war, rose to avalanche proportions. It was this plus the fear that the Russian advance into northern Europe might not stop with Finland that brought Quisling to Berlin in December. For Germany the most serious consideration was that the Allies might use the Russo-Finnish conflict as an excuse to establish bases in Norway.[34]

The First Planning Phase

Studie Nord

In his order to the OKW on 14 December, Hitler stipulated that the planning for Norway was to be kept within a very limited circle. That same day the Chief of Staff, Army, learned that a preventive operation in Norway which would also involve Denmark was being considered and ordered Army Intelligence to supply maps and information on the two countries.[35] In the OKW, Generalmajor Alfred Jodl, Chief of the Operations Staff, took the preliminary work in hand. Entries in the *Jodl Diary* indicate that he discussed the question of Norway with the Chief of Staff, Air Force, presumably on the assumption that the Air Force role would be predominant in any operation which might result. On 19 December he reported to Hitler, who ordered that control of the planning be kept in the hands of the OKW. The next day Jodl and Generaloberst Wilhelm Keitel, Chief, OKW, discussed the possibilities of reconnaissance in Norway and considered assigning missions to the air attachés, the *Abwehr* (OKW Intelligence), and the Reconnaissance Squadron "Rowel," a special purpose air unit that was supposed to be able to escape detection from the ground by flying at extremely high altitudes.[36] Toward the end of the month, under the title *Studie Nord,* the Operations Staff, OKW, completed a rough summary of the main military and political issues relating to Norway. This Hitler ordered held in the OKW for the time being.[37]

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[32] *Denkschrift und Richtlinien ueber die Fuehrung des Krieges im Westen, 9.10.39, in OKM, Weisungen OKW (Fuehrer).*

[33] International Military Tribunal, Doc. 789–PS.

[34] Walther Hubatsch, *Die deutsche Besetzung von Daenemark und Norwegen 1940* (Goettingen: Musterschmidt-Verlag, 1952), pp. 11–13. *Fuehrer Conferences, 1939,* p. 56. *Naval War Diary,* Vol. 4, p. 17.

[35] *Jodl Diary,* 13 Dec. 39. *Halder Diary, Vol.* III, p. 5.

In the meantime the Rosenberg organization had also gone to work. Its first task was to overcome the objections of the Foreign Ministry, which held the purse strings, and arrange financial backing for Quisling. The Foreign Ministry and the Foreign Political Office of the Nazi Party were rivals of long standing. The case of Quisling and Norway was particularly touchy since it might involve a danger to Soviet-German friendship, which Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop regarded as his crowning achievement.[38] Eventually, after several weeks of negotiations, Rosenberg managed to secure an initial subvention of 200,000 gold marks to be paid out to Quisling in installments. It was planned also to supply him with quantities of readily convertible commodities, such as sugar and coal.

While he was in Berlin, Quisling had presented a plan for bringing the Germans into Norway by so-called "political" means. He proposed to send a detachment of picked men from among his followers to Germany for intensive military training. Later they would be attached as interpreters and guides to a special German force which would be transported to Oslo in coal ships. In the Norwegian capital, after the Germans and Quisling-men had captured the leading members of the government and taken possession of the administrative offices, Quisling would assume control and issue an official call for German troops.[39]

After Quisling returned to Oslo, Rosenberg detailed Reichsamtsleiter Hans-Wilhelm Scheidt to act as go-between. In Oslo Scheidt found that the diplomats at the German Legation placed very little stock in the talk of a British invasion and wanted to steer clear of Quisling to avoid compromising themselves. The naval attaché, on the other hand, offered his assistance and soon became Scheidt's chief collaborator. From the outset the Germans thought Quisling's proposed *coup* involved too many chances for slip-ups; they preferred to see it mature slowly and diverted Quisling's efforts toward the gathering of political and military information. Most of the money from Germany went for propaganda and to support the National Union Party's weekly newspaper. Quisling's reports were sent to Rosenberg who passed them on to Hitler. Raeder kept in contact through the naval attaché; but the OKW remained indifferent and apparently neither asked Quisling's advice nor paid much attention to that which he volunteered.[40]

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[36] *Jodl Diary,* 18–20 Dec. 39.

[37] *Halder Diary,* Vol. III, p. 13.

[38] Rosenberg, *Die politische Vorbereitung der Norwegen Aktion, 15 Juni 1940* (*Anlage 6, Schickedantz, Aktennotiz Norwegen, 22.12.39*). EAP 250–d–18–42/2.

[39] Seraphim, *op. cit.* pp. 162 ff. Rosenberg, *Die politische Vorbereitung der Norwegen Aktion, 15 Juni 1940.* EAP 250–d–18–42/2.

[40] *Ibid.*

At the turn of the year everything about the Norwegian project was still vague. Reporting to Hitler, on 30 December, Raeder again declared that Norway must not be allowed to fall into British hands. He saw a danger that British volunteers "in disguise" might carry out a "cold" occupation and warned that it was necessary to be ready.[41] That his feeling of urgency was not shared in other quarters was demonstrated two days later when Halder and Keitel agreed that it was in Germany's interest to keep Norway neutral and that a change in the German attitude would depend on whether or not Great Britain actually threatened the neutrality of Norway.[42] On the other hand, Hitler's interest was increasing, but slowly, stimulated by rumors and newspaper talk of an Allied intervention in Finland. It is also possible that he had some knowledge of the British attempt on 6 January 1940 to secure an agreement permitting British naval forces to operate in Norwegian territorial waters. On 10 January, after a delay of almost two weeks, he released the OKW *Studie Nord* to the service high commands.

The Naval Staff, the only one of the service staffs at that time showing any inclination to concern itself with Norway, reviewed *Studie Nord* in a meeting on 13 January 1940. As summarized in the Naval Staff minutes, *Studie Nord* proceeded from the premise that Germany could not tolerate British control of the Norwegian area and that only a German occupation which would forestall the British could prevent such a development. Because of the Russo-Finnish war, according to the OKW, anti-German opinion was on the increase in Scandinavia, working to the benefit of Great Britain, and Norwegian resistance to a British invasion was hardly to be expected. The OKW believed that the British might use the German offensive in the west as an excuse to occupy Norway. *Studie Nord* directed that a special staff, headed by an Air Force general, be created to devise a plan of operations. The Navy was to supply the chief of staff, and the Army the operations officer.

During the review of *Studie Nord* the Naval Staff, with Raeder present, argued strongly against an operation in Norway. It did not believe a British invasion of Norway was imminent, and it considered a German occupation in the absence of any previous British action as strategically and economically dangerous. At the end, Raeder agreed that to preserve the *status quo* was the best solution, but he ordered the Naval Staff to initiate additional planning because the course of the war could not be predicted and it was necessary, on principle, to include the occupation of Norway in the Navy's preparations.[43]

Between 14 and 19 January the Naval Staff worked out an expansion of *Studie Nord*. The mission it foresaw for the Navy was to support and, where necessary, execute troop landings at the major Norwegian ports from Oslo to Tromsö. Surprise was regarded as absolutely essential to the success of the operation. If surprise was achieved, no serious opposition was anticipated during the naval phase of the operation, at least not on the outbound trip. The Naval Staff regarded the Norwegian warships as "no threat, even to single German light units"; the only British ships which it thought needed to be taken into account were those that happened to be on patrol off Norway, possibly one or two cruisers. The Norwegian coastal fortifications, not manned in peacetime, were not expected to offer much opposition, but it was deemed necessary to capture them intact at the earliest possible moment in order to be able to fight off British counterattacks.

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[41] *Fuehrer Conferences,* 1939, p. 62.
[42] *Halder Diary,* Vol. III, p. 13.
[43] *Naval War Dairy,* Vol. 5, pp. 62–64.

The assault force, the Naval Staff calculated, could consist of either the 22d Infantry Division (airborne) or a mountain division. Transportation would be provided by the 7th Air Division (the airborne and parachute troop command) and the Navy. The first possibility considered was to move the troops that did not go by air on merchant ships disguised as ore transports. If successful, this method would guarantee surprise, but it had disadvantages: the large number of ships required could not be assembled without attracting attention; they were slow and could not be protected; and it would be difficult to keep the troops concealed, particularly since the ships would have to pass through the Leads with Norwegian pilots aboard. A second possibility, sending the troops on warships, avoided all of these disadvantages but limited the number of troops and severely restricted the amounts of supplies and equipment that could be transported. The Naval Staff recommended a combination of the two, the first wave of troops moving by warship and a second wave of troops, supplies, and equipment following in merchant steamers.

The Naval Staff assumed that Denmark, Sweden, and the Soviet Union would be concerned in the operation in one way or another. It recommended acquisition of bases in Denmark, at the northern tip of Jutland in particular, as a means of approaching the Shetlands–Norway passage and of facilitating naval and air control of the Skagerrak. Possible objections from the Soviet Union were to be warded off by assurances to be given "without regard for actual intentions" that the northern Norwegian ports would be occupied only for the duration of the war. In the case of Sweden, it was "to be made absolutely clear that pro-German neutrality and complete fulfillment of all delivery obligations [of goods] is the sole road to preservation of its independence." [44]

The Krancke Staff

During the first weeks of January 1940 Hitler's attention was still concentrated entirely on the plan for the offensive in the west which he hoped to put into execution before the end of the month. But because the weather predictions became increasingly less favorable after the middle of the month, Hitler, on 20 January, announced that the operation could probably not begin before March. It then became necessary to look at the Scandinavian situation in a new light, since the postponement of the German offensive might give the Allies time to intervene in the north.

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[44] *OKM, SKL, I Op., 73/40, Ueberlegungen Studie Nord, 19.1.40.*

On 23 January Hitler ordered *Studie Nord* recalled. The creation of a working staff in the OKL was to be canceled, and all further work was to be done in the OKW. In that order he killed two birds with one stone, placing the planning for an operation in Norway on a somewhat firmer basis and, at the same time, giving an example of the more stringent security procedures he had demanded after an incident earlier in the month which had resulted in some of the plans for the invasion in the west falling into Allied hands when an Air Force major made a forced landing on Belgian territory. On the 27th, in a letter to the commanders in chief of the Army, Navy, and Air Force, Keitel stated that henceforth work on *Studie Nord* would be carried out under Hitler's direct personal guidance and in closest conjunction with the over-all direction of the war. Keitel would take over supervision of the planning, and a working staff, which would provide a nucleus for the operations staff, would be formed in the OKW. Each of the services was to provide an officer suitable for operations work, who also, if possible, had training in organization and supply. The operation was assigned the code name WESERUEBUNG.[45]

The staff for WESERUEBUNG assembled on 5 February, and was installed as a special section of the National Defense Branch, Operations Staff, OKW. Its senior officer was Captain Theodor Krancke, Commanding Officer of the cruiser *Scheer*. For the first time direct control of operational planning was taken out of the hands of the service commands and vested in Hitler's personal staff, the OKW. This move, although justified by the character of the operation being planned, constituted a downgrading of the service commanders in chief and their staffs. It accounts, at least in part, for the violent Army and Air Force reactions several weeks later.

Although it was widely assumed later—after the failure of Allied counteroperations in Norway—that the Germans had laid their plans and had begun gathering intelligence well in advance, probably even before the outbreak of war, such was not the case. The Krancke staff began its work with very modest resources. German military experience afforded no precedent for the sort of operation contemplated, and the preliminary work of the OKW and Naval Staff provided little more than tentative points of departure for the operational planning. A certain amount of intelligence information on the Norwegian Army and military installations was available, which, while it was useful and later proved accurate, was not of decisive importance. For maps and general background information it was often necessary at first to rely on hydrographic charts, travel guides, tourist brochures, and other similar sources. The limitation of personnel imposed by the necessity for preserving secrecy was a further handicap. The Krancke staff in the approximately three weeks of its existence, nevertheless, produced a workable operations plan.

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[45] *Jodl Diary,* 23 Jan 40. *Halder Diary,* Vol. III, p. 28. International Military Tribunal, Doc. 063–C.

The Krancke Plan for the first time focused clearly on the technical and tactical aspects of the projected operation. As the Naval Staff had earlier, the Krancke staff based its plan on a division of Norway into six strategically important areas:

1. The region around Oslo Fiord.
2. The narrow coastal strip of southern Norway from Langesund to Stavanger.
3. Bergen and its environs.
4. The Trondheim region.
5. Narvik.
6. Tromsö and Finnmark.

To control those fairly small areas, which contained most of Norway's population, industry, and trade, was, in effect, to control the entire country. For that reason the Krancke staff proposed to execute simultaneous landings at Oslo, Kristiansand, Arendal, Stavanger, Bergen, Trondheim, and Narvik. Tromsö and Finnmark it regarded as being of no direct interest to Germany and significant only for the two airfields located near Tromsö. Capture of the seven ports was expected to entail a loss for the Norwegians of eight of their estimated sixteen regiments, nearly all of their artillery, and almost all of their airfields.

The operation was to be executed by a corps composed of the 22d Infantry Division (airborne), the 11th Motorized Rifle Brigade, one mountain division, and six reinforced infantry regiments. The troops for the landings were to be transported by a fleet of fast warships and by the 7th Air Division, which would provide eight transport groups and approximately five battalions of parachute troops for the first wave. Planes of the 7th Air Division would bring in the second wave, consisting of the main elements of the 22d Infantry Division, in three days. The remaining troops, the third and fourth waves, would arrive by ship on about the fifth day. Under the Krancke Plan, with the exception of the troops for Narvik and Trondheim where distance precluded airborne operations, half the troops were to be transported by air and half by sea. The Air Force was also to provide bomber and fighter support.

The Krancke staff believed that the occupation could be restricted to the seven main ports. It did not expect the Norwegian armed forces to show either the desire or the ability to offer effective resistance, and it thought that, after the landings, the German position could be consolidated by diplomatic means. The Norwegian Government would be assured of "as much independence as possible" in internal affairs. Its armed forces, except for the troops on the Finnish border, would be reduced to cadre strength, and orders for mobilization would require the approval of the German commander. German troops would take over the fortresses and military supply depots.

To provide security for the supply lines from Germany, the Krancke staff proposed using the threat of a military occupation of Jutland to extract permission from the Danish Government for use of airfields in northern Jutland. To induce Sweden and the Soviet Union to remain neutral, they were to be assured that the occupation would be terminated at the end of the war and that Germany guaranteed the former boundaries of Norway. At a later date, the Krancke staff believed, it would be necessary to require from Sweden use of the Luleå–Narvik railroad for hauling supplies to Narvik.[46]

The Decision to Occupy Norway

The Appointment of Falkenhorst

In mid-February the *Altmark* Incident gave the first real sense of urgency to the preparations for WESERUEBUNG. On 14 February the German tanker *Altmark,* with 300 captured British seamen from the commerce raider *Graf Spee* aboard, entered Norwegian territorial waters on its return trip to Germany. Despite strong misgivings the Norwegian Admiralty, which suspected the nature of the *Altmark's* "cargo," permitted the ship to proceed. On 16 February, when six British destroyers put in an appearance, the *Altmark*, escorted by two Norwegian torpedo boats, took refuge in Jössing Fiord near Egersund. Disregarding protests from the Norwegian naval craft, the British destroyer *Cossack* entered the fiord and, sending a party aboard the *Altmark,* took the prisoners off after a brief skirmish.

The deliberate action of the *Cossack* convinced Hitler that the British no longer intended to respect Norwegian neutrality, and on 19 February he demanded a speed-up in the planning for WESERUEBUNG. On Jodl's suggestion he decided to turn the operation over to a corps commander and his staff. The nomination fell to General der Infanterie Nikolaus von Falkenhorst, Commanding General, XXI Corps, who had acquired some experience in overseas operations during the German intervention in Finland in 1918.[47] Talking to Rosenberg the same day, Hitler decided that Quisling's plan for bringing his party to power in Norway should be dropped. The Quisling organization, he ordered, was to stand by for the eventuality that the British might force Germany to protect its routes to Norway.[48]

At noon on 21 February Falkenhorst reported to Hitler and was given the mission of planning and, if it were to be executed, commanding the operation against Norway. The plan would have two objectives: to forestall the British by occupying the most important ports and localities, in particular the ore port of Narvik; and to take such firm control of the country that Norwegian resistance or collaboration with Great Britain would be impossible.[49] The next day, after Falkenhorst had reviewed the Krancke Plan and prepared a rough preliminary estimate of his own, Hitler confirmed the appointment. On 26 February a selected staff from Headquarters, XXI Corps, began work in Berlin.

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[46] *OKW, WFA, Abt. III, Weisung an Oberbefehlshaber "Weseruebung," 26.2.40.*
[47] *Jodl Diary,* 19 Feb 40. *Halder Diary,* Vol. III, pp. 62, 64.
[48] Seraphim, *op. cit.,* p. 102.

The first major question concerned Denmark. Falkenhorst's staff decided not to rely on diplomatic pressure as the Krancke plan suggested and proposed, instead, a military occupation of Jutland which might have to be followed by an operation against Sjaelland if the Danish reaction were hostile. On 28 February Falkenhorst reported the change to Keitel and asked for a provisional corps headquarters and two divisions to conduct the operation in Denmark.

On the same day, 28 February, an even more important change, one which eventually made extensive revision of the Krancke Plan necessary, was introduced. Replying to a question whether it would be better to execute Weseruebung before or after the offensive in the west (Operation Gelb) which Hitler had raised two days earlier, Jodl proposed to prepare Weseruebung in such a fashion that it could be executed independently of Gelb in terms both of time and forces employed. All of the planning up to that time had assumed that Weseruebung would have to come either before or after Gelb since the parachute troops and transports of the 7th Air Division would be required for both operations. The OKW now decided to reduce the commitment of parachute troops for Weseruebung to four companies and to hold back one airborne regiment of the 22d Infantry Division. These changes and that concerning Denmark Hitler approved on 29 February after he had established a landing at Copenhagen as an additional requirement.[50] Satisfied with the military plan, Hitler then called in Rosenberg and told him that there would be no attempt to enlist Quisling's active support in any form.[51]

The Fuehrer Directive

On 1 March, in the "Directive for Case Weseruebung," Hitler established the general requirements for the operation and authorized the start of actual operational planning. The strategic objectives were to be to forestall a British intervention in Scandinavia and the Baltic Sea area, to provide security for the sources of Swedish iron ore, and to give the Navy and Air Forces advanced bases for attacks on the British

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[49] *Gruppe XXI, Ia, Kriegstagebuch Nr. 1,* 20.2.40–8.4.40, 21 Feb 40. AOK 20 180/5.

[50] *Gruppe XXI, Ia, Kriegstagebuch Nr. 1,* 26–29 Feb 40. *Jodl Diary,* 28 and 29 Feb 40.

[51] Seraphim, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

Isles. The idea of a "peaceful" occupation to provide armed protection for the neutrality of the Scandinavian countries was to be basic to the operation. Daring and surprise would be relied on rather than strength in terms of numbers of troops. WESERUEBUNG would consist of WESERUEBUNG NORD, the air- and sea-borne invasion of Norway, and WESERUEBUNG SUED, occupation of Jutland and Fuenen and landings on Sjaelland which could be expanded later if the Danes resisted. Charged with planning and executing WESERUEBUNG, Falkenhorst, as Commanding General, Group XXI, would be directly subordinate to Hitler.[52] The forces to be employed would be requisitioned from the three services separately. The Air Force units for WESERUEBUNG would be under the tactical control of Group XXI, and independent employment of forces by the Air Force and Navy would be worked out in close collaboration with the Commanding General, Group XXI.[53]

The appearance of the Fuehrer Directive promptly brought a wave of protests and objections from the Army and the Air Force. With the campaign in the west impending, neither wanted to divert forces to a subsidiary theater of operations. The Army had not altered the negative attitude toward the projected operation that Halder had expressed on 5 October 1939. Moreover, personal feelings were involved, since up to that time neither the OKH nor the OKL had been brought directly into the planning for WESERUEBUNG. Halder noted in his diary that as of 2 March 1940 Hitler had not "exchanged a single word" with the Commander in Chief, Army, on the subject of Norway. Above all, the Army objected to troop dispositions being made independently by the OKW.[54] The Air Force entered a protest against the subordination of Luftwaffe units to Group XXI and, on 4 March, secured a ruling from Hitler that all air units would be placed under X Air Corps, which would receive its orders, "based on the requirements of Group XXI," through the OKL. The Air Force also did not want to release the 22d Infantry Division and considered the demands on the 7th Air Division and other air units too high.[55]

In contrast to the other two service staffs, the Naval Staff endorsed the Fuehrer Directive wholeheartedly. Meeting, on 2 March, to review the directive, it decided that the problem was no longer purely military but had "become a first class question of war economy and politics." Reversing the position it had taken in January, the Naval Staff concluded:

> It is no longer solely a case of improving Germany's strategic position and gaining isolated military advantages or of weighing the pros and

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[52] In German military terminology "group" (*Gruppe*) was used to designate an intermediate unit, in this instance, between a corps and an army.

[53] *Der Fuehrer und Oberste Befehlshaber der Wehrmacht, WFA/Abt. L Nr. 22070/40, Weisung fuer "Fall Weseruebung," 1.3.40,* in *German High Level Directives, March–April 1940.*

[54] *Halder Diary,* Vol. III, p. 64. *Jodl Diary,* 1 Mar 40.

[55] *Jodl Diary,* 3 and 4 Mar 40.

cons of the possibility of executing WESERUEBUNG and of asserting military scruples, but for the Armed Forces it is a matter of accommodation at lightning speed to political conditions and necessities.

The Naval Staff recommended that Hitler be informed of the difficulties standing in the way of a successful execution of WESERUEBUNG and of the Navy's determination "to abandon all scruples and sweep aside the difficulties that arise by using all its forces." [56]

On 3 March Hitler called for "the greatest speed" in preparing WESERUEBUNG. He saw a necessity to act quickly and with force in Norway and forbade delays on the part of the individual services. He wanted the forces for WESERUEBUNG assembled by 10 March and ready for the jump-off by the 13th so that a landing would be possible in northern Norway on approximately 17 March. He decided to execute WESERUEBUNG before GELB (the offensive in the west), leaving an interval of about three days between the operations.[57]

On the afternoon of 5 March at the Reich Chancellery Falkenhorst and his chief of staff gave a progress report to Hitler and the three commanders in chief. Generalfeldmarschall Hermann Goering, angry and claiming he had been kept in the dark about the operation, condemned all the planning so far as worthless. After Goering had given vent to his feelings, Hitler explained that he expected an Allied intervention in Scandinavia under the guise of help for Finland in the near future. He insisted again on accelerating the work on WESERUEBUNG.

Two days later, after Falkenhorst had staged a private presentation at Karinhall to sooth Goering's ruffled feelings, WESERUEBUNG began to take concrete form. On 7 March Hitler signed a directive assigning the 3d Mountain Division, the 69th, 163d, 196th, and 181st Infantry Divisions, and the 11th Motorized Rifle Brigade for employment in Norway and the 170th, 198th, and 214th Infantry Divisions for Denmark. That disposition of forces he declared final and no longer subject to change. WESERUEBUNG and GELB were thereby completely divorced from each other.[58] The 7th Air Division and 22d Infantry Division were released for GELB. As a consequence, it was no longer possible to contemplate airborne and parachute landings on the scale which had been envisioned in the Krancke Plan.

Hitler's Decision

After 5 March the timing of WESERUEBUNG became the major concern at the highest command level. In a conference with Hitler on the 9th Raeder declared that prompt execution of WESERUEBUNG was urgent. The British, he maintained, had the opportunity of occupying

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[56] *Naval War Diary,* Vol. 7, p. 10.

[57] *Halder Diary,* Vol. III, pp. 78, 81. *Jodl Diary,* 3 Mar 40.

[58] *OKW, WFA, Abt. L, Nr. 22082/40,* in *Anlagenband 1 zum K.T.B. 1, Anlagen 1–52.* AOK 20 E 180/7. *Gruppe XXI, Ia, Kriegstagebuch Nr. 1,* 5 Mar 40. *Jodl Diary,* 5 and 7 Mar 40.

Norway and Sweden under the pretext of sending troops to aid the Finns. Such an occupation would result in loss of the Swedish iron ore and could be decisive against Germany. He characterized WESERUEBUNG as contradicting all the principles of naval warfare since Germany not only did not have naval supremacy but would have to carry out the operation in the face of a vastly superior British Fleet; still, he predicted, success would be attained if surprise were achieved.[59]

On 12 March, as news of progress in the Soviet-Finnish peace conference spurred the Allies on to last-minute offers of assistance for Finland, Hitler ordered a speed-up in the German preparations and instructed Group XXI to include an emergency action in its calculations.[60] The Navy had canceled all other naval operations on 4 March and on that day began holding submarines in port for WESERUEBUNG. On the 11th, long-range submarines were dispatched to the main ports on the Norwegian west coast where they were to combat Allied invasion forces or, according to the circumstances, support WESERUEBUNG.[61]

The peace treaty between Russia and Finland signed in Moscow on the night of 12 March created an entirely new situation. British submarines were observed concentrated off the Skagerrak on the 13th; and an intercepted radio message setting 14 March as the deadline for loading transports indicated that an Allied operation was getting under way; but another message, intercepted on the 15th, ordering the submarines to disperse, revealed that the peace had disrupted the Allied plan.[62] On the German side, ice in the Baltic Sea prevented the assembly and loading of the warships and transports for WESERUEBUNG.[63] The peace deprived both the Germans and the Allies of the means for justifying an invasion of Norway in world opinion; and Hitler, on 13 March, ordered the planning continued "without excessive haste and without endangering secrecy." [64]

The OKW concluded that, with their pretext gone, the Allies would not attempt to take the offensive in Norway for the time being. Hitler was inclined to agree, but he believed that the British would not abandon their strategic aim of cutting off the German ore imports and, to accomplish that, would begin by invading Norwegian territorial waters. He thought the Allies, later, might still go so far as to occupy bases and ports in Norway. In his opinion the Scandinavian area had become a decisive sphere of interest for both belligerents and would remain "a permanent seat of unrest"; therefore, he considered WESERUEBUNG still necessary and reaffirmed his intention to carry out the operation shortly before GELB.[65]

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[59] *Fuehrer Conferences,* 1940–I, p. 20.

[60] *Gruppe XXI, Ia, Kriegstagebuch Nr. 1,* 12 Mar 40.

[61] International Military Tribunal, Doc. 2265–NOKW. *Naval War Diary,* Vol. 7, p. 63.

[62] *Fuehrer Conferences,* 1940–I, p. 22. *Naval War Diary,* Vol. 7, p. 100.

[63] *Naval War Diary,* Vol. 7, p. 75.

[64] *Gruppe XXI, Ia, Kriegstagebuch Nr. 1,* 13 Mar 40.

Jodl and Raeder concurred fully in Hitler's reasoning, but other officers in the small circle associated with WESERUEBUNG began to have doubts. Jodl's deputy suggested that, since Operation GELB could be expected to tie down the British and French ground and air forces for a long time, WESERUEBUNG could be dropped.[66] Similar thoughts had, apparently, started taking root in Falkenhorst's staff. Jodl complained that Falkenhorst's "three chiefs" (Krancke and the Air Force representative on the Krancke staff had been attached as naval and air chiefs of staff) were starting to worry about things that did not concern them and that Krancke saw more drawbacks than advantages in WESERUEBUNG.[67]

It seems that even Hitler, despite his expressed determination, would have preferred at least a temporary postponement. But the time for decision had come. From the point of view of the Navy an early execution was imperative because all other naval operations had been brought to a standstill by WESERUEBUNG and because after 15 April the nights in the northern latitudes would become too short to afford proper cover for the naval forces. Reporting to Hitler on 26 March, Raeder declared that, although there was no need to anticipate a British landing in Norway in the immediate future, he believed Germany would have to face the question of carrying out WESERUEBUNG sooner or later. He advised that it be done as soon as possible. Hitler agreed and promised to set the date for some time in the period of the next new moon, which would begin on 7 April.[68]

On 1 April Hitler conducted a detailed review of the WESERUEBUNG plan. After he had heard reports from Falkenhorst, the senior naval and air officers, and the commanders of the landing teams, he gave his approval and closed the meeting with a short address. He told the officers that the days until the occupation was completed would impose on him the greatest nervous strain of his life, but he was confident of victory since the history of warfare demonstrated that well and carefully prepared operations usually succeeded with relatively small losses. The British were trying to cut Germany off from its sources of raw materials by disrupting the sea lanes along the Norwegian coast and intended, further, to assume the role of a "policeman" in Scandinavia and to occupy Norway. This he could not tolerate under any circumstances. It was high time Germany provided itself with secure routes out into the world and did not allow every new generation to be subjected to British pressure. That was the fated struggle of the German people, and he was not the man to evade necessary decisions or battles.[69]

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[65] *Naval War Diary,* Vol. 7, p. 96.

[66] Walter Warlimont, *Gutachten zu der Kriegstagebuch-Ausarbeitung OKW/WFSt, "Der noerdliche Kriegsschauplatz,"* p. 10. MS # C-0991. OCMH.

[67] *Jodl Diary,* 28 Mar 40.

[68] *Fuehrer Conferences,* 1940-I, p. 22. *Naval War Diary,* Vol. 7, p. 161.

On the next day, 2 April, having been assured by the Commanders in Chief, Air Force and Navy, that flying conditions were expected to be satisfactory and ice would not impede naval movements in the Baltic, Hitler designated 9 April as WESER Day and 0515 as WESER Time.[70]

Allied Objectives and Intentions

An Allied staff paper of April 1939 on "broad strategic policy" recognized that in the first phase of a war with Germany economic warfare would be the only effective Allied offensive weapon.[71] In the light of this and the World War I experience in blockading Germany, Norway inevitably assumed a special importance for the Allies as soon as war broke out. Before mid-September 1939 the British Government had made its first attempt to secure from Norway a "sympathetic" interpretation of its rights as a neutral.[72] Winston Churchill, as First Lord of the Admiralty, was already engaged in devising more active measures. On 12 September he submitted his plan CATHERINE for sending naval forces through the straits leading into the Baltic Sea to gain control of those waters and to stop the Swedish ore traffic; but since it involved extensive alteration of several battleships to give them greater protection against aerial bombs, it could not be put into effect at an early date. At the end of the month he suggested mining Norwegian territorial waters to cut the ore route from Narvik. In December he renewed his efforts to obtain consent for the mining of the Leads but could not obtain a decision for action.[73]

During the early months of the war there was a strong tendency in the Allied camp to base hopes on the weakness of Germany in terms of strategic natural resources, with the result that Norway and the Swedish ore began to loom very large in Allied thinking. Late in November the British Ministry of Economic Warfare expressed the view that, cut off from the Swedish ore supply, Germany could not continue the war for more than twelve months and, deprived of the supply which passed through Narvik, would suffer "acute industrial embarrassment." [74] (On the other hand, Admiral Raeder believed that Germany could stand the loss of from two and a half to three and a half million tons of ore per year which came via Narvik and that, by storing ore in Sweden during the winter for summer shipment, it could probably reduce the annual loss to about one million tons.)[75] Subsequent Allied planning centered on the decisive significance of the Swedish ore, often to the extent of not recognizing all of the difficulties of securing and holding both Narvik and the Kiruna–Gällivare mines against the determined German counteraction such a move would undoubtedly produce.

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[69] *Gruppe XXI, Ia, Notiz fuer das Kriegstagebuch, 1.4.40,* in *Anlagenband 1 zum K.T.B. 1, Anlagen 1–52.* AOK 20 E 180/7.

[70] *Gruppe XXI, Ia, Kriegstagebuch Nr. 1,* 2 Apr 40.

[71] Butler, *op. cit.,* p. 71.

[72] T. K. Derry, *The Campaign in Norway* (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1952), p. 9.

[73] Winston S. Churchill, *The Second World War* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1948), Vol. I, p. 112.

[74] Derry, *op. cit.,* p. 11.

At the end of November the Soviet attack on Finland created new possibilities for the Allies by arousing a hope that the Scandinavian countries, out of sympathy for Finland and on the ground of their obligations as members of the League of Nations, might permit Allied troops sent to aid the Finns to cross their territory. Such an undertaking could be made to include the occupation of Narvik and Kiruna–Gällivare almost automatically, since the Narvik–Luleå railroad provided the most direct route to Finland. The French Government went so far as to think of establishing a major theater of war in Scandinavia to draw the main action away from the Franco-German frontier. However, on 19 December, when the French Premier Edouard Daladier proposed the dispatch of an expeditionary force to Finland, he met opposition from the British, who were fearful of provoking a breach with the Soviet Union.[76]

When the early successes of the Finns made it appear that the Red Army would be a weak adversary, French enthusiasm for a second front in Scandinavia grew. After Marshal Mannerheim on 29 January appealed for support, the Supreme War Council of the Allies decided to send an expedition timed for mid-March. The French wanted to blockade Murmansk and attempt landings in the Pechenga region and talked of simultaneous operations in the Caucasus in addition to the occupation of parts of Norway and Sweden.[77] The British plan, which was adopted, was more modest and, while ostensibly intended to bring Allied troops to the Finnish front, laid its main emphasis on operations in northern Norway and Sweden. The main striking force was to land at Narvik and advance along the railroad to its eastern terminus at Luleå, occupying Kiruna and Gällivare along the way. By late April two Allied brigades were to be established along that line. Another Allied brigade would then be sent on to Finland. A secondary force of five British Territorial battalions was to occupy Trondheim, Bergen, and Stavanger to provide defensive bases in southern Norway. Stavanger would be held only long enough to destroy its airfield, while Trondheim was to become the major base in the south and the port of debarkation for Allied troops sent into southern and central Sweden to meet the expected German counterattack. Eventually the British intended to put as many as 100,000 men in the field, and the French 50,000.[78]

The Allied effort moved slowly, and massive Soviet offensives in February rapidly wore down the Finnish resistance. The execution of the Allied plan, meanwhile, remained contingent on the willingness of the Norwegian and Swedish Governments to grant rights of transit to the Allied troops. A Finnish request to that effect was turned down on 27 February, and another by the British and French Governments was refused on 3 March. By that time the Finns had decided to open peace negotiations. On 9 March the Finnish Ministers in Paris and London were told that, if the Finns issued a call for help, the Allies would come to their aid with all possible speed. The Allies promised delivery of a hundred bombers within two weeks, but the dispatch of troops still remained dependent on the attitude of Sweden and Norway. On the same day, 9 March, Marshal Mannerheim, who regarded the Allied proposal as too uncertain, gave his government categorical advice to conclude peace.[79]

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[75] *Fuehrer Conferences,* 1940, I, 16–18.

[76] Carl Gustaf Mannerheim, *Erinnerungen* (Zurich: Atlantis Verlag, 1952), p. 403.

[77] International Military Tribunal, Doc. 83—Raeder.

[78] Derry, *op. cit.,* p. 13.

At the last minute, on 12 March, still hoping for an appeal from the Finns, the Allies decided, at the suggestion of the French, to attempt a semipeaceable invasion of Scandinavia. Assuming that the recent diplomatic responses of the Norwegian and Swedish Governments ran counter to public opinion in those countries, they proposed to "test on the Norwegian beaches the firmness of the opposition." A landing was to be made at Narvik; if it succeeded, it would be followed by one at Trondheim. Forces for Bergen and Stavanger were to be held ready. The objectives were to take Narvik, the railroad, and the Swedish ore fields; but the landing and the advance into Norway and Sweden were to take place only if they could be accomplished without serious fighting. The troops were not to fight their way through either Norway or Sweden and were not to use force except "as an ultimate measure of self-defense." [80] The treaty which Finland signed in Moscow on the night of the 12th ended the Allied hopes. The troops which had been assembled in England were released to other assignments.

On 21 March Paul Reynaud became the head of a French Government committed to a more aggressive prosecution of the war, and a week later, at a meeting of the Supreme War Council, the Scandinavian question again came under consideration.[81] The new Allied undertaking was to consist of two separate but related operations, WILFRED and PLAN R 4. WILFRED involved the laying of two minefields in Norwegian waters, one in the approaches to the Vest Fiord north of Bodö and the other between Ålesund and Bergen, with the pretended laying of a third near Molde. The laying of the minefields was to be justified in notes delivered to Norway and Sweden several days in advance protesting those nations' inability to protect their neutrality. The supposition was that WILFRED would provoke a German counteraction, and PLAN R 4 was to become effective the moment the Germans landed in Norway "or showed they intended to do so." Narvik and the railroad to the Swedish border were the principal objectives. The port was to be occupied by one infantry brigade and an antiaircraft battery, with the total strength to be built up eventually to 18,000 men. One battalion, in a transport escorted by two cruisers, was to sail within a few hours after the mines had been laid. Five battalions were to be employed in occupying Trondheim and Bergen and in raiding Stavanger to destroy the Sola airfield. The battalions at Trondheim and Bergen would later be reinforced by the troops from Stavanger if the movement could be managed, but otherwise they were cast on their own resources. The success of the plan depended heavily on the assumption that the Norwegians would not offer resistance, and, strangely, the possibility of a strong German reaction was left almost entirely out of account.[82]

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[79] Mannerheim, *op. cit.*, pp. 380–87.
[80] Butler, *op. cit.*, p. 113.
[81] International Military Tribunal, Doc. 83—Raeder.

The execution of WILFRED and PLAN R 4 was at first tied to Operation ROYAL MARINE, a British proposal for sowing fluvial mines in the Rhine, to which the French objected on the ground that it would provoke German bombing of French factories. WILFRED had been scheduled for 5 April, but it was not until that date that the British Government agreed to carry out the Norwegian operations independently of ROYAL MARINE.[83] As a result, the mines were not laid until the morning of 8 April, at which time the German ships for WESERUEBUNG were already advancing up the Norwegian coast. When it became known on the morning of the 8th that the German Fleet, which aircraft had sighted on the previous day, was at sea in the vicinity of Norway, the minelaying force was withdrawn, PLAN R 4 was abandoned, and the British Fleet was ordered to sea in an attempt to intercept the German naval force.[84]

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[82] Derry, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

[83] Churchill, *op cit.*, pp. 508–10, and 575–83. International Military Tribunal, Doc. 83—Raeder.

[84] Derry, *op. cit.*, pp. 25–26.

Chapter 2

The Plan WESERUEBUNG

The Problem

Given the risks and limitations imposed by British naval superiority, the chief task in the German planning for the occupation of Norway was to devise a scheme of operations suited to the peculiarities of the Norwegian geography. From the first the German planning centered on one feature of the country which stood out above all the others, namely, that the population and economic life were concentrated along the coast or in valleys cutting inland from the coast and that settlement was not contiguous but further concentrated in nodes relatively isolated from one another, the largest of them around Oslo, Bergen, and Trondheim.

Oslo was by far the most important. It was not only the political capital and largest city but was situated in the heart of the dominant agricultural and industrial region and was the hub of the railroad network fanning out to Trondheim, Åndalsnes, Bergen, and the cities of the south coast. Its location in the southeastern corner of the country off the narrow waters of the Skagerrak made it easily accessible from the German-controlled Baltic Sea and placed it beyond the reach of the British Navy. In the south the Danish peninsula of Jutland was virtually a land bridge from Germany to Oslo and the Norwegian south coast. Bergen, the second largest city, was strategically significant for its location close to the British Isles. Trondheim, the medieval capital of Norway, ranked next to Oslo as a center of economic activity. It dominated the land and coastal sea routes from the south into the Norwegian Arctic regions. For the Germans, is was an indispensable steppingstone to Narvik. Of the Norwegian Atlantic ports, it offered the most promise as a naval base. Also important as ports were Tromsö, Stavanger, Kristiansand, and Haugesund and, militarily at least, Bodö, Namsos, and Åndalsnes. Two of these had to be included in the German planning: Stavanger for its air base and Kristiansand because of its strategic position on the Norwegian south coast. In the case of the others the risks of leaving them open had to be weighed against the necessity to husband the limited shipping which the Navy could provide, and, in the end, they were all omitted.

The scattering and isolation of the principal centers were not accidental but were imposed by the nature of the terrain. The cities occupied the few relatively low-lying and hospitable areas of a country in which one half of the land lay at altitudes over 2,000 feet and mountains rose abruptly out of the sea all along the coast. Interior communications were poorly developed because of the expense of building roads and railroads which required hundreds of tunnels and bridges. The sea afforded the most dependable and expeditious routes of communication.

Tactically, the best solution, as the Germans quickly concluded, was to take as many of the main centers as possible in the first assault and establish contact between them later. Its correctness was confirmed by the known condition and dispositions of the Norwegian Army. The Army, a victim of years of neglect, could, as a consequence of the recent crisis, be expected to have reached approximately its authorized peacetime strength of 19,000 men, about one-fifth of full mobilization. Its six divisions (in wartime field brigades) were assigned as follows: 1st Division—Halden, 2d Division—Oslo, 3d Division—Kristiansand, 4th Division—Bergen, 5th Division—Trondheim, and 6th Division—Harstad. If Oslo, Kristiansand, Bergen, and Trondheim were taken simultaneously, it could be expected that five of the six Norwegian divisions would either be knocked out immediately or seriously crippled.

The Navy

Operation WESERUEBUNG was acutely vulnerable during its naval phase since the German Navy, even with all of its available ships committed, was no match for the British Navy. A British intervention while the ships were at sea could have resulted in both failure of the operation and annihilation of the Navy. Consequently, from the beginning, the planning had laid heavy emphasis on surprise. To achieve surprise, speed and accurate timing were essential. It was therefore decided to transport the assault troops to Norway on warships.

To execute the operation, a so-called Warship Echelon of 11 groups was organized as follows:

Group 1 (Narvik): the battleships *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* with 10 destroyers (2,000 troops).

Group 2 (Trondheim): the cruiser *Hipper* and 4 destroyers (1,700 troops).

Group 3 (Bergen): the cruisers *Koeln* and *Koenigsberg,* the service ships *Bremse* and *Karl Peters,* 3 torpedo boats, 5 motor torpedo boats (1,900 troops).

Group 4 (Kristiansand–Arendal): the cruiser *Karlsruhe,* the special service ship *Tsingtau,* 3 torpedo boats, and 7 motor torpedo boats (1,100 troops).

Group 5 (Oslo): the cruisers *Bluecher, Luetzow, Emden,* 3 torpedo boats, 2 armed whaling boats, and 8 minesweepers (2,000 troops).
Group 6 (Egersund): 4 minesweepers (150 troops).
Group 7 (Korsör and Nyborg): (1,990 troops).
Group 8 (Copenhagen): (1,000 troops).
Group 9 (Middelfart): (400 troops).
Group 10 (Esbjerg): (no troops).
Group 11 (Tyborön): (no troops).

Groups 7 to 11 consisted of the World War I battleship *Schleswig-Holstein* (to provide artillery support for the landing at Korsör) and miscellaneous minesweepers, submarine chasers, merchant ships, tugs, and picket boats.

Groups 1 and 2 were to proceed together to the vicinity of Trondheim escorted by the *Scharnhorst* and the *Gneisenau,* which carried no troops. Group 2 would then maneuver at sea until W Time, while Group 1 continued north to Narvik. After passing the latitude of Trondheim, the *Gneisenau* and the *Scharnhorst* would set a northwesterly course away from the coast to divert British naval units in the area. The *Luetzow* was at first scheduled to join Group 2 and, after taking troops to Trondheim, to break out into the Atlantic on a raiding mission, but when engine trouble developed at the last minute the cruiser had to be transferred to the Oslo Group.[1]

The warships could not carry heavy equipment or large quantities of supplies for the troops, and the destroyers would exhaust their fuel loads on the trips to Narvik and Trondheim. To meet these problems and because it was expected that the British would intercept all ships moving north along the west coast of Norway after W Day, the Tanker Echelon and the Export Echelon (*Ausfuhrstaffel*) were created. Their ships, disguised as ordinary merchant vessels, were to put in at Norwegian ports before the arrival of the warships. The Tanker Echelon was made up of eight ships, two for Narvik and one for Trondheim to reach port before W Day, the rest to dock at Oslo, Bergen, Stavanger, and Kristiansand on W Day. The Export Echelon, carrying military equipment and supplies, consisted of seven ships, three for Narvik, three for Trondheim, and one for Stavanger.[2]

The Krancke staff had proposed that the merchant ships leave Germany after the warships and reach their destinations approximately five days after the landings. But Group XXI saw very little likelihood of any German ships being able to make port on the west coast of Norway after W Day and returned to the device of stationing the merchant ships in Norwegian ports before W Day, which the Naval Staff had rejected as too dangerous in its original work on *Studie Nord*. The Navy protested that this method of operation jeopardized the secrecy of the operation.[3] To meet the Navy's objections, OKW ordered that none of the ships in the Export and Tanker Echelons were to depart before W minus 6 days. As a result, the danger of a breach of secrecy still existed, and most of the ships, after minor delays, did not have enough time to reach their destinations.[4]

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[1] Kurt Assmann, *Deutsche Schicksalsjahre* (Wiesbaden: Eberhard Brockhaus, 1950), p. 134. Hubatsch, *op. cit.,* pp. 44, 96–98. *Verbindungsstab Marine, B. Nr. 130, Seetransportuebersicht nach dem Stande vom 22.3.40,* in *Gruppe XXI, Anlagenband 4 zum Ktb. Nr. 1, Anlage 55.* AOK 20 E 180/9b.

[2] *Verbindungsstab Marine, B. Nr. 130, loc. cit.* Assmann *Schicksalsjahre,* p. 135.

The main troop and supply movement was to be carried out by eight sea transport echelons. The 1st Sea Transport Echelon, timed to reach port on W Day, was made up of 15 ships going to Oslo, Kristiansand, Bergen, and Stavanger. All succeeding echelons were to unload at Oslo. The 1st Sea Transport Echelon also aroused misgivings in the naval command since its ships, which would be at sea before the ships of the Warship Echelon, carried troops in uniform. To preserve secrecy, the 1st Sea Transport Echelon was given the code designation OSTPREUSSEN STAFFEL, and the ships' captains were given orders to proceed to East Prussia, ostensibly to relieve pressure on the railroads. Not until after they had put to sea were they given instructions concerning their actual destinations.[5] The 2d Sea Transport Echelon (11 ships) and the 3d (13 ships) were to dock at Oslo on W plus 2 and W plus 6 days, respectively. The 4th to 8th Echelons would arrive between W plus 8 and W plus 12 days, using the returned ships of the first three echelons.[6]

For the Navy, the most dangerous part of the operation, as Raeder saw it, was the return of the warships. He was confident that the landings could be executed successfully if surprise were achieved, but he believed that thereafter the ships along the west and north coasts of Norway would be exposed to attack by superior British forces. Raeder wanted the ships of the Narvik and Trondheim groups to rejoin the *Scharnhorst* and the *Gneisenau* as quickly as possible for a combined breakthrough to their home ports, while those at and south of Bergen were to return independently using the cover of the coasts as far as possible.[7] That intention met with opposition from Hitler, the OKW, and the OKL, all of whom wanted ships left at the ports, particularly at Narvik and Trondheim, to furnish artillery and antiaircraft support and to bolster the morale of the troops. Raeder, on the other hand, defended the viewpoint that not one destroyer, let alone a cruiser, could be left behind at Narvik or Trondheim at a time when the fate of the German Navy was hanging in the balance.[8] The question was debated until

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[3] *Naval War Diary,* Vol. 8, pp. 18, 20.

[4] Assmann, *Schicksalsjahre,* p. 136.

[5] *Naval War Diary,* Vol. 8, p. 53. General der Infanterie a.D. Erich Buschenhagen, Comments on Part I, *The German Northern Theater of Operations, 1940–1945,* 7 Jun 56.

[6] *Verbindungsstabmarine, B. Nr. 130, loc. cit.*

[7] *Fuehrer Conferences,* 1940, I, p. 20.

[8] *Ibid.*

2 April, when Hitler declared that he personally did not approve of the decision to withdraw the ships immediately but did not want to interfere too strongly in matters pertaining purely to naval warfare.[9]

Barring accidents, only the submarines were to engage enemy naval forces. Operation HARTMUT by the submarines was planned to provide protection for the surface ships during the transport phase and to provide defense against enemy naval action at the beachheads. In all, 28 submarines were to be stationed off Narvik, Trondheim, Bergen, Stavanger, in the vicinity of the Orkney and Shetland islands, and west of the Skagerrak. Some of the units for Narvik and Trondheim had left port as early as 11 March. The main force departed between 31 March and 6 April.[10]

Group XXI

The Command Organization

The Norwegian campaign, depending for its successful execution equally on each of the three services, was the first German armed forces operation. In the "Directive for Case WESERUEBUNG" of 1 March 1940 the staff of Group XXI was made directly subordinate to Hitler. The staff operated within the OKW, receiving its instructions from Hitler and from the OKW. The Chief of the Operations Staff, OKW, General Jodl, and under him the National Defense Branch headed by Col. Walter Warlimont participated in the planning and acted as a coordinating agency in cases where the requirements of Group XXI involved demands on one or another of the services.[11]

A unified command, at least of the air and ground forces, was projected at the start; but, after Air Force protests resulted in the Air Force's retaining tactical control of its units employed in WESERUEBUNG, Falkenhorst remained in actual command only of the ground forces. The OKL and the OKM conducted their own planning independently in collaboration with Group XXI and assigned operational control to separate commands. The Air Force and Navy representatives of the Krancke staff remained with the staff of Group XXI, where they maintained liaison with their respective services. Command of the air units was given to X Air Corps under Generalleutenant Hans Geissler. For the Navy, the Naval Staff did the planning, aided by the staffs which would command the operations at sea, Naval Group West (North Sea and the Atlantic coast of Norway) and Naval Group East (Baltic Sea, Kattegat, and Skagerrak).[12]

The planning and direction of operations in Denmark were assigned to the staff of the XXXI Corps under General der Flieger Leonhard

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[9] *Jodl Diary,* 2 Apr 40.

[10] International Military Tribunal, Doc. 151–C. Hubatsch, *op. cit.,* p. 47. Assmann, *Schicksalsjahre.,* p. 134.

[11] International Military Tribunal, Docs. 174–C and 3520–NOKW.

[12] *Jodl Diary,* 3 Mar 40. International Military Tribunal, Doc. 2265–NOKW.

Kaupisch. The XXXI Corps was to be directly subordinate to Group XXI until W plus 3 days, when it would revert to the control of OKH.[13]

To maintain liaison after the landings, the Heimatstab Nord (Home Staff North) was created. It consisted of one officer from each of the services and was attached to the OKW, where it functioned as a link between Group XXI and OKW. Its principal mission immediately after the landings was to supervise and regulate the sea transport movements for WESERUEBUNG NORD.[14]

For the operation itself, a three-way division of command was evolved. Falkenhorst commanded the ground troops. With respect to his opposite numbers in the Navy and Air Force he ranked as "the first among equals," but he had no direct authority over units of the other two services. The Navy appointed a Commanding Admiral, Norway, and Plenipotentiary of the Commander in Chief, Navy, with his headquarters in Oslo; an Admiral of the Norwegian South Coast at Kristiansand, who had under him the port commanders at Oslo and Kristiansand; and an Admiral of the Norwegian West Coast at Bergen, with the port commanders at Stavanger, Bergen, Trondheim, and Narvik under him.[15] The X Air Corps had exclusive control of air operations, and General Halder noted in his diary in mid-April that Falkenhorst did not have control of a single plane.[16] In the course of the campaign a Luftgaukommando (territorial ground command of the Air Force) was formed, and then on 12 April the Fifth Air Force under Generaloberst Erhard Milch was installed to assume control of both the Luftgaukommando and the Air Corps.[17]

The three-way division of command functions was particularly in evidence at the time of the initial landings. During the transport phases the Navy had full command at all levels at sea and the Air Force in the air. For substantial changes in the plan the agreement of Group XXI was to be obtained. During the landings command passed to the senior Army officer at each beachhead, whose demands for naval and air support were to be met "as far as possible." At the individual beachheads the commanding officer of the Army units was responsible for ground operations and security; the Navy appointed a port commander to take charge of the seaward defenses; and, where air units were available, the senior Air Force officer became responsible for air security. One of the three, usually the senior officer present, was designated armed forces commander. In emergencies he was empowered to issue orders to all three services within his district; on the whole it was assumed that each would receive his orders through his own command channels.[18]

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[13] *Halder Diary,* Vol. III, 101.

[14] *Gruppe XXI, Ia, 191/40, Dienstanweisung fuer den "Heimatstab Nord,"* in *Anlagenband 1 zum Ktb Nr. 1, Anlagen 1–52, 20.2.–8.4.40.* AOK 20 E 180/7.

[15] *Gruppe XXI, Ia, Nr. 71/40, in Anlagenband 2 zum K.T.B. Nr. 1, Anlage 53.* AOK E 180/8. *WBN, Ia, Nr. 1394/41, Erfahrungsbericht ueber Aufgaben des W.B., 19.4.41,* in *Anlage zu AOK Norwegen Ia, Nr. 2179/44.* AOK 20 53295.

[16] *Halder Diary,* Vol. III, 118.

[17] Ulrich O. E. Kessler, *The Role of the Luftwaffe in the Campaign in Norway, 1940,* p. 8. MS # B–485. OCMH.

The peculiarities of the command organization, which were in part a result of interservice jealousy, were to a large extent dictated by the German lack of experience in combined operations. The OKW was organized to coordinate rather than to command, and Falkenhorst had no substantial experience in directing either air or naval operations. The final report on experiences of the campaign submitted by Group XXI states:

> That the commands and troop contingents of the three armed forces branches worked together almost without friction cannot be credited to purposeful organization of the commanding staff. It was, instead, entirely an achievement of the personalities involved who knew how to cooperate closely in order to overcome the inadequacies of organization.[19]

The Ground Forces, Norway

"Operations Order No. 1 for the Occupation of Norway," based on Hitler's directive of 1 March, was issued by Group XXI on 5 March. It was concerned with the landings and consolidation of the beachheads. Two possibilities were envisioned: (1) peaceful occupation could be achieved; (2) the landings and occupation would have to be carried out by force. If the first possibility materialized, the Norwegian Government was to be assured of extensive respect for its internal sovereignty, and the Norwegian troops were to be treated tactfully. If resistance was encountered, the landings were to be forced by all possible means, the beachheads secured, and nearby training centers of the Norwegian Army occupied. The complete destruction of the Norwegian Army was not considered possible as an immediate objective because of the size of the country and difficulty of the terrain, but it was believed that the localities selected for landings comprised the majority of the places which needed to be taken in order to prevent an effective mobilization and assembly of Norwegian forces and to control the country in general. The landing teams were to attempt operations against forces in the interior only if they could be conducted without impairing the defense of the beachheads. Attempted Allied landings were to be fought off, but unnecessary losses were to be avoided. If the enemy proved superior, the troops were to withdraw inland until a counterattack could be launched.[20]

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[18] *Gruppe XXI, Ia, Anlage zu Ia Nr. 82/40, Unterstellungsverhaeltnisse bei "Weseruebung Nord," in Anlagenband 1 zum KTB Nr. 1, Anlagen 1–52, 20.2–8.4.40.* AOK 20 E 180/7.

[19] *Gruppe XXI, Ia, in Erfahrungsberichte der Gruppe XXI von 30.7.40.* AOK 20 E 279/15.

[20] *Gruppe XXI, Ia, Nr. 20/40, Operationsbefehl fuer die Besetzung Norwegens Nr. 1,* in *Anlagenband zum Ktb, Nr. 1, Anlagen 1–52.* AOK 20 E 180/7.

For Norway six divisions were assigned: the 3d Mountain Division (two infantry regiments) and the 69th, 163d, 181st, 196th, and 214th Infantry Divisions. The 3d Mountain Division had seen some action in the Polish campaign; the rest were newly formed divisions. In addition, Group XXI was given four batteries of 10-cm. guns, two batteries of 15-cm. guns, one tank company with Mark I and II tanks (the Mark I mounted two machine guns, the Mark II a 2-cm. gun), two companies of railroad construction troops and one communications battalion.[21] The Air Force supplied three parachute companies and three antiaircraft battalions, which remained under the command of X Air Corps.[22] In terms of numbers the German and Norwegian divisions were equally matched, but the Norwegian divisions, for the most part, existed only on paper.

Landings were to be made at Narvik, Trondheim, Bergen, Kristiansand, and Oslo, and landing parties of one company each sent ashore at Egersund and Arendal to take possession of the cable stations. Stavanger was to be taken in an airborne operation.[23] The size of the initial sea-borne landing force, 8,850 men, was determined by the available shipping space since the assault troops had to be moved in fast warships. No major reinforcement of the landing teams at the beachheads was contemplated until contact could be established overland with Oslo, where the main force was to debark—16,700 men (in addition to the 2,000 landed on W day) to be brought in by three sea transport echelons during the first week, and another 40,000 to be transported in shuttle movements thereafter.[24] An additional 8,000 troops were to be transported by air within three days.[25]

The first operations order was followed in March by a series of detailed orders for each of the landing teams. Separate plans were drawn up for taking the coastal fortifications on the fiords, since the passing of these fortifications was expected to be a critical point in the operation, and alternate landing sites were selected for use in the event that the coastal batteries could not be taken. The projected execution of WESERUEBUNG NORD after the landings was outlined in "Operations Order No. 2," which Group XXI issued on 2 April.

In the final plan Oslo was to be taken by elements of the 163d Infantry Division, two battalions brought in on warships and two battalions arriving by air transport after two companies of parachute troops had secured Fornebu Airfield. A reinforced battalion of the 163d would execute the landing at Kristiansand, and the division bicycle troops would take Arendal. The force at Kristiansand was to be brought up to regimental strength by the arrival at about noon on W Day of ships carrying two more battalions. As soon as troops became available at Oslo the 163d Division was to secure the rail line Oslo–Bergen as far as Hönefoss and the line Oslo–Kristiansand as far as Kongsberg.[26]

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[21] *Ibid.*

[22] *Gen. Kdo. X Fl. K., Ia, Nr. 10058, 73, 89, 90, and 91/50,* in *Gruppe XXI, Anlagenband 3 zum Ktb, Nr. 1, Anlage 54.* AOK 20 E 180/9a.

[23] *Gruppe XXI, Ia. 20/40, loc. cit.*

[24] *Verbindungsstab Marine, B. Nr. 130, Seetransportuebersicht nach dem Stande von 22.3.40,* in *Gruppe XXI, Anlagenband 5 zum Ktb. Nr. 1, Anlage 56.* AOK 20 E 180/10. Kurt Assmann, *The German Campaign in Norway. Origin of the Plan, Execution of the Operation, and Measures Against Allied Counter-attack* (London: Naval Staff, Admiralty, 1948), p. 13.

[25] *Gruppe XXI, Ia, (2) Nr. 200/40, in Anlagenband 5 zum Ktb. Nr. 1, Anlage 56.* AOK 20 E 180/10.

The 69th Infantry Division was to occupy the Norwegian west coast from Nordfiord (one hundred miles north of Bergen) to Egersund. Two battalions would land at Bergen, two by air at Stavanger (a third reaching Stavanger by air on W plus 1 day), and the division bicycle troop at Egersund. The remaining units of the 69th Division were to arrive at Oslo on W plus 2 and 3 days and proceed by rail to Bergen.

Trondheim was to be taken by two battalions of the 138th Regiment of the 3d Mountain Division. Its 139th Regiment and the division headquarters would land at Narvik, where they were to gain control of the railroad to the Swedish border and, later, occupy Tromsö and Harstad, the headquarters of the Norwegian 6th Division. A strong detachment was to be kept in readiness to occupy the iron mines at Kiruna in Sweden. The battalions at Trondheim and the units scheduled to follow via Oslo would be sent to Narvik when the situation permitted.

The 196th Infantry Division, upon reaching Oslo on W plus 2 days, was to create conditions for an advance by rail to Trondheim and Åndalsnes, taking and holding Lillehammer, Hamar, and Elverum north of Oslo with two regiments. The third regiment was to proceed by rail to Åndalsnes as soon as possible, and the first two regiments were to be relieved on W plus 7 days to move northward to Trondheim. From Trondheim, a regiment would advance northward to occupy Steinkjer, Grong, Namsos, and Mosjöen. The mission of the division would then be to hold the northwest coast of Norway from the 66th parallel (in the vicinity of Mosjöen) to Ålesund and to secure the interior to the Swedish border.

The 181st Infantry Division, after debarking at Oslo on W plus 6 days, was to mop up the Norwegian forces east and southeast of Oslo; the first available troops would take Fredrikstad, Sarpsborg, and Halden southeast of Oslo. One regiment would relieve the units of the 163d Division holding the area Kjeller–Lilleström, and a reinforced battalion would advance to Kongsvinger near the Swedish border. Taking advantage of the Glommen Line (fortifications which the Norwegians had built before World War I along the Glommen River), the division would prepare to stand off any attempted Swedish intervention. Another regiment would relieve the units of the 196th Division in the Lillehammer–Hamar–Elverum area.

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[26] *Gruppe XXI, Ia, Nr. 194/40, Operationsbefehl Nr. 2, Weisungen fuer die Besetzung Norwegens nach durchgefuehrter Landung,* in *Anlagenband 1 zum Ktb. Nr. 1, Anlagen 1–52, 20.2–4.8.40.* AOK 20 E 180/7. *Gruppe XXI, Ia, Anlage 77, Kartenband zum Ktb. 1.* AOK 20 E 180/23. Hubatsch, *op. cit.,* pp. 85, 86.

The 214th Infantry Division would reach Oslo on W plus 8 days. It was to provide security for the southwest coast from the Bömla Fiord (north of Stavanger) to the Söndeled Fiord (northeast of Arendal). The mass of the division would be concentrated in the Stavanger area. The 214th Division would relieve units of the 163d Division at Kristiansand and of the 69th Division at Stavanger.

At the completion of the operation the distribution of forces would be as follows: the 181st Division east of Oslo and in the zone along the Swedish border, the 163d Division in Oslo and holding the zone immediately west of Oslo from the mouth of the Oslo Fiord to Hamar, the 214th Division holding the area Stavanger–Kristiansand–Arendal, the 69th Division at Bergen, the 196th Division in the zone Åndalsnes–Trondheim–Mosjöen, and the 3d Mountain Division holding the Narvik–Tromsö area.[27]

The Ground Forces, Denmark

Group XXI issued "Operations Order No. 1 for the Occupation of Denmark" on 20 March, and the plan for WESERUEBUNG SUED was worked out in detail in "Corps Order No. 3" which the XXXI Corps completed on 21 March. The XXXI Corps, organized to take advantage of the ideal terrain conditions in Denmark for operations by mobile troops, was to be composed of the 170th (one regiment on trucks) and 198th Infantry Divisions, the 11th Motorized Rifle Brigade (with Mark I and II tanks), three motorized machine gun battalions, two batteries of heavy artillery (10-cm.), two companies of tanks (Mark I and II), and three armored trains. The Air Force supplied a company of parachute troops, a motorcycle company from the "General Goering" Regiment, and two battalions of antiaircraft guns.

The 170th Division and the 11th Motorized Rifle Brigade were to take Jutland in an advance northward from the German-Danish border. The principal objective of the operations in Jutland (in fact, the principal objective of WESERUEBUNG SUED) was Aalborg, at the northern tip of the Peninsula. Its two airfields were to be taken on W plus 2 hours by a parachute platoon and an airborne battalion. The 11th Motorized Rifle Brigade, supported on its left by the motorized regiment of the 170th Division, was to advance rapidly along the west side of the peninsula, reaching Aalborg on W Day. The remaining regiments of the 170th Division were to break any resistance which might be offered along the border or in the south and reach Aalborg, Frederikshaven, and Skagen on W plus 1 or W plus 2 days. Three reinforced companies of the 170th Division were to go by sea from Kiel to Middelfart, landing at W Hour to secure the bridge across the Little Belt and subsequently advancing across Fuenen to Nyborg. On the west coast of Jutland, light naval forces were to land at Esbjerg and Tyborön.

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[27] *Gruppe XXI, Ia, Nr. 194/40, loc. cit. Gruppe XXI, Ia, Anlagen 77 and 78, Kartenband zum Ktb. 1.* AOK 20 E 180/23.

The mission of the 198th Infantry Division was to occupy Sjaelland. One battalion was to land at Copenhagen; the division staff and a reinforced battalion were to land at Korsör on the west coast of Sjaelland and advance overland to Copenhagen; and one company would land at Nyborg to secure the crossing of the Great Belt. A battalion with an armored train, transported by train ferry from Warnemuende, was to land at Gedser and advance northward to Copenhagen across Falster via the bridge at Vordingborg, which was to be taken in advance by a parachute company (less one platoon).[28]

The Air Force

The X Air Corps, which had operated against British merchant shipping and naval forces, was reinforced with a variety of types of air units for WESERUEBUNG. Its principal units were the 4th, 26th, and 30th Bombardment Wings.[29] The 26th Bombardment Wing had one group of the 100th Bombardment Wing attached. Attached to the 30th Bombardment Wing were one dive bomber group, two twin-engine fighter groups, one single-engine fighter group, one coastal reconnaissance and naval support group, and two long-range reconnaissance squadrons.[30] Under the Transport Chief (Land) the corps had seven groups of three- and four-engine transports and the 1st Special Purpose Transport Wing (*Kampfgeschwader z.b.V.* 1) for airborne and parachute operations. Under the Transport Chief (Sea) it had the 108th Special Purpose Transport Wing (seaplane transports) and three air-traffic safety ships.[31] The number of aircraft of various types employed was approximately as follows:[32]

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[28] *Gruppe XXI, Ia, 126/40, Operationsbefehl fuer die Besetzung von Daenemark, Nr. 1, in Anlagenband 1 zum Ktb. Nr. 1, Anlagen 1–52, 20.2–8.4.40.* AOK 20 E 180/7. *Hoeheres Kommando z.b.V. XXXI, Ia, Nr. 123/40, Korpsbefehl Nr. 3,* in *Befehlshaber der deutschen Truppen in Daenemark, Besetzung Daenemarks am 9. u. 10.4.40.* XXXI AOK E 290/2. *Gruppe XXI, Ia, Anlage 84, Kartenband zum Ktb, 1.* AOK 20 E 180/23.

[29] A wing (*Geschwader*) totaled about 100 aircraft organized into three groups. The group (*gruppe*), totaling about 27 aircraft, was organized into three squadrons (*Staffeln*) of 9 planes each.

[30] Assmann, *Schicksalsjahre.,* p. 136. Hubatsch, *op. cit.,* p. 415. *Generalkommando X Fl. K., Ia, B. Nr. 10053/40, Operationsbefehl fuer das X Fliegerkorps am Wesertag,* in *Gruppe XXI, Anlagenband 3, zum Ktb. Nr. 1, Anlage 54.* AOK 20 E 180/9a.

[31] Hubatsch *op. cit.,* p. 415. *Generalkommando des X Fl. K., Ia., Nr. 10056/40, Weisungen fuer den Transportchef (Land) fuer die Weseruebung and Nr. 10057/40, Weisungen fuer den Transportchef (Sea) fuer die Weseruebung,* in *Gruppe XXI, Anlagenband 3 zum Ktb. Nr. 1, Anlage 54.* AOK 20 E 180/9a.

[32] *The Rise and Fall of the German Air Force,* Great Britain, Air Ministry Pamphlet No. 248 (1948), p. 59.

Total	1,000
Bombers	290
Dive bombers	40
Single-engine fighters	30
Twin-engine fighters	70
Long-range reconnaissance	40
Coastal	30
Transports	500

The "Operations Order for the X Air Corps on WESER Day," together with detailed orders for the subordinate units, was issued on 20 March. The main bomber force, one wing plus two groups (less two squadrons), was to be held in readiness at German bases to combat British naval forces. One squadron was to land at Stavanger on W Day and operate against British naval forces from there. The remaining bombers were to stage aerial demonstrations over Norway and Denmark. Two groups were to demonstrate over Oslo (one squadron landing at Oslo as soon as Fornebu Airfield had been taken and thereafter becoming available for support of the ground troops), one group in the zone Kristiansand–Bergen, one squadron over Stavanger, one group over Copenhagen, and one group in support of the advance of the ground troops through Jutland. The units staging demonstrations were to be prepared to support the landings, by force if necessary, and had the additional missions of leaflet dropping and observation of the progress of ground operations. The dive bomber group was to transfer two squadrons to Aalborg on the morning of W Day and one squadron to Stavanger that afternoon. It would operate against British naval forces. One twin-engine fighter group, less 15 planes, after supporting the airborne operation at Aalborg, was to land there and assume responsibility for the protection of air-transport movements between Aalborg, Stavanger, and Oslo. Three flights (*Schwaerme*), of five twin-engine fighters each, were to support the landings at Oslo, Stavanger, and Copenhagen. Those at Oslo and Stavanger would land there; that over Copenhagen would land at Aalborg. The other twin-engine fighter flight would provide fighter cover for the bombers over Copenhagen and, after supporting the further operations of the 4th Bombardment Wing, proceed to Aalborg. The single-engine fighter group would support the taking of Esbjerg by ground troops and land either at Esbjerg or Oksböl, thereafter taking over the defense of the Danish west coast. It was intended to transfer the dive bombers and fighters employed in Jutland to Norway on W plus 1.[33]

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[33] *Generalkommando des X Fl. K., Ia, Nr. 10053/40, loc. cit. Generalkommando des X Fl. K., Ia, Nr. 10064/40 Befehl fuer den Einsatz des Kampfgeschwaders 26 am Wesertag; Nr. 10054/40, Befehl fuer den Einsatz des Kampfgeschwaders 4–am Wesertag; Nr. 10054/40, Befehl fuer den Einsatz des Kampfgeschwaders 30 am Wesertag; Nr. 10055/40, Befehl fuer den Einsatz der I./Stukageschwader 1 am Wesertag; Nr. 10052/40, Befehl fuer den Einsatz der I./ZG 76 am Wesertag; Nr. 10051/40, Befehl fuer den Einsatz der LI./JG 77 ab Wesertag,* in *Gruppe XXI, Anlagenband 3 zum Ktb. Nr. 1, Anlage 54.* AOK 20 E 180/9a.

The Transport Chief (Land) was to employ seven groups in transport movements to Oslo, Stavanger, and Aalborg and the special purpose wing in the airborne and parachute operations. The Transport Chief (Sea) was to station air-traffic safety ships at Trondheim and Bergen on W Day, to transport troops to Bergen on W Day, and to begin moving troops and supplies to Trondheim and Narvik on W plus 1. The two squadrons of long-range reconnaissance planes were to reconnoiter over the North Sea beginning on W minus 1 day (one squadron) and to observe the progress of the landing on W Day. The coastal reconnaissance and naval support group was to move two squadrons to Trondheim and one to Bergen on W Day, where they would assume responsibility for reconnaissance off the Norwegian coast.[34]

Political Planning

To preserve secrecy, participation of civilian offices in the planning for Weseruebung was prohibited, and political preparations were handled within the National Defense Branch of the Operations Staff, OKW, where the economic, administrative, and diplomatic measures were formulated in advance, to be transmitted to the appropriate agencies for execution at the proper time. The major political objective was to dissuade the Norwegian and Danish Governments from armed resistance and to persuade them to tolerate the German occupation. For their acquiescence, the governments were to be offered extensive retention of their internal sovereignty and economic aid. Their foreign political sovereignty was to be circumscribed. The initial demands were not to go beyond those necessary for the success of the operation in order to make their acceptance easy and on the assumption that more far-reaching demands could be put through without difficulty after the Wehrmacht had control. The troop commanders at the beachheads were to attempt to reach agreements with local governmental units before directives from the central authorities could arrive, and at the beginning of the operation the populations and armed forces were to be subjected to an intensive campaign of radio and leaflet propaganda calculated to arouse the impression that it was in the national interest not to resist the German forces.[35]

To protect the landward flank, strict neutrality was to be required of Sweden with assurances that Swedish warships would not operate outside the three-mile limit in the Kattegat, the Sound, and along the south coast for the duration of the German operation. Subsequent demands, it was thought, might include control of the Swedish overseas cable connections and use of the Swedish railroads to transport German troops and supplies.[36] Admiral Raeder at one point thought it might also be useful to offer Tromsö and the northern tip of Norway to the Soviet Union, but Hitler did not want the Russians so near.[37]

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[34] *Generalkommando des X Fl. K., Ia, Nr. 10056/40 and 10057/40, loc. cit.; Generalkommando X Fl. K., Ia, Nr. 10072/40, Befehl fuer den Einsatz der Aufklaerungsstaffel (F) 1.122 waehrend der Weseruebung; Nr. 10071/40, Befehl fuer den Einsatz der 1./F 120 am Wesertag; Nr. 10077/40, Befehl fuer den Einsatz der Kuestenfliegergruppe 506 waehrend der Weseruebung,* in *Gruppe XXI, Anlagenband 3 zum Ktb. 1, Anlage 54.* AOK 20 E 180/9a.

[35] [*OKW,WFA*], *Abt. L, Nr. 22076/40, Vortragsnotiz; Nr. 22074/40; Nr.   /40, Besondere Anordnungen fuer politische und Verwaltungsmassnahmen bei "Fall Weseruebung,"* in *Chefsachen Gruppe IV, Mappe "Weseruebung."* OKW/213.

The diplomatic moves were to be made simultaneously with the troop landings in order to preserve the element of surprise and to place the Danish and Norwegian Governments under the greatest possible pressure. At approximately 0500 on 9 April Dr. Curt Braeuer and Cecil von Renthe-Fink, the Ministers in Oslo and Copenhagen, as Plenipotentiaries of the German Reich would inform the governments of the German action and demand immediate submission. If the terms were accepted, the plenipotentiaries would remain to keep the governments under surveillance, and deputies would be assigned for the same purpose to the ministries. Since Braeuer and Renthe-Fink would have very short advance notice of the impending operation, Generalmajor Kurt Himer, Chief of Staff, XXXI Corps, and Lt. Col. Hartwig Pohlman, Operations Officer, Group XXI, were assigned to advise and assist them as Plenipotentiaries of the Wehrmacht. Two days before the operation, Himer and Pohlman would proceed to Copenhagen and Oslo in civilian clothes, their uniforms going as courier luggage. They were to perform a last-minute reconnaissance and at 2300 on 8 April were to brief the Ministers on their part in the forthcoming operation. They also carried sets of prearranged radio code letters to be used in informing Group XXI and the landing parties of the decisions made by the Danish and Norwegian Governments.[38] On 3 April the Chief of Staff, OKW, General Keitel, informed von Ribbentrop that the military occupation of Denmark and Norway had been in preparation under orders from Hitler for a long time and that the OKW had had ample opportunity to investigate all the questions relating to the operation.[39] In effect, all that remained for the Foreign Ministry was to execute the OKW plan.

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[36] *[OKW/WFA], Abt, L, Nr. 22076/40, Politische Forderungen an die schwedische Regierung,* in *Chefsachen Gruppe IV, Mappe: "Weseruebung."* OKW/213.

[37] *Fuehrer Conferences,* I, 1940, p. 21.

[38] International Military Tribunal, Doc. 3596–PS.

[39] International Military Tribunal, Doc. 629–D.

Chapter 3

The Landings

WESERUEBUNG Begins

The ships of the Export Echelon were loaded and ready at Hamburg on 22 March, and three ships for Narvik departed on W minus 6 days (3 April) as did the first ship of the Tanker Echelon. The warship groups for Norway loaded at Wesermuende, Cuxhaven, Swinemuende, and Wilhelmshaven on the night of W minus 3 days, Groups 1 and 2 getting under way at midnight that night. By that time most of the ships of the 1st Sea Transport Echelon, which had begun to depart at 0400 on W minus 3 days, were already at sea. The time after which the operation could no longer be canceled was set at 1500 on W minus 3 days.[1]

As the day of the landings approached, the preservation of secrecy became increasingly urgent and at the same time more difficult. The circle of those who knew about the operation was kept to a minimum. An elaborate security system was devised, and troop movements were disguised as maneuvers with details left behind in the empty billets to carry on all the standard routines. The assembly of large numbers of troops and ships at the Baltic and North Sea ports presented a definite risk, but the greatest danger came in the interval between the sailing of the first ships on W minus 6 days and the landings. The Naval Staff, which, it will be remembered, objected to the dispatch of transports ahead of the warship groups, believed it would be an extraordinary stroke of luck if the transport fleet managed to pass through the entrances to the Kattegat and Skagerrak without incident and without giving the enemy warning.[2]

The German luck was to hold. On 2 April the Swedish Minister in Berlin attempted to question the German State Secretary in the Foreign Ministry concerning rumors of troop and transport concentrations in the port of Stettin. That same day the Swedish Naval Attaché reported he had been told that the Germans had prepared an operation to forestall a British landing in Norway. On the 4th the Netherlands Military Attaché received information concerning WESERUEBUNG and GELB from an anti-Nazi German intelligence officer in the OKW. The information was passed on to the Danish and Norwegian ministers, but the Danish Military Attaché thought it might be a plant by the OKW; and neither the Danish nor the Norwegian Government was greatly impressed by the information. The Norwegian Foreign Minister thought an attack unlikely because of British command of the sea.

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[1] *Verbindungsstab Marine, Nr. 130, Seetransportuebersicht nach dem Stande von 22.3.40.,* in *Gruppe XXI, Ia, Anlagenband zum Ktb. Nr. 1, Anlage 56.* AOK 20 E 180/10.

[2] *Gruppe XXI, Ia, Erfahrungsbericht,* in *Erfahrungsberichte der Gruppe XXI von 30.7.40.* AOK 20 E 279/15. *Naval War Diary,* Vol. 8, p. 41.

On 6 April, although a report reached London through Copenhagen that the Germans planned to land a division conveyed in ten ships at Narvik on the 8th, the British did not believe that the Germans could anticipate British forces so far north. They thought that, at best, the Germans might forestall them at Stavanger or possibly involve them in a race for Bergen or Trondheim; and the report was evaluated as of doubtful value, possibly only a move in the war of nerves.[3]

In Germany, for the period 7 to 9 April, all the foreign military attachés were invited to an inspection of the West Wall. On the evening of the 5th, Goering invited the diplomatic corps in Berlin to the premiere of the motion picture "Baptism of Fire," which showed the destructive effects of German aerial bombardment on Polish cities. The picture was shown that same evening at the German legation in Oslo.[4]

When the Danish Cabinet met on 8 April, the situation had changed. British ships had laid mines in Norwegian waters, and in the early morning German warships had passed through the Great Belt. The passage of the ships apparently was taken to mean that the threat was not aimed at Denmark. In the afternoon the Danish General Staff received information that a column of German troops fifty to sixty miles long was on route between Rendsburg and Flensburg near the Danish border. The General Staff wanted to order mobilization; but the Cabinet, at a late sitting, influenced by news that the German ships had passed the northern tip of Jutland, refused. At 1800 the Cabinet decided to take limited action: it declared a state of alarm for southern Jutland and a lesser state of readiness for the rest of the country.[5]

On 1 April the Norwegian Minister, in a report to his government, had mentioned that Germany might take certain measures to prevent British interference with the ore shipments from Narvik, but he believed the troop embarkations at Stettin did not concern Norway. Reporting on the information obtained through the Netherlands Legation on 4 April, he thought the operation was probably aimed at the west coast of Jutland to secure air and naval bases there. On the 7th, information reached Oslo that a fleet of fifteen to twenty transports had left Stettin

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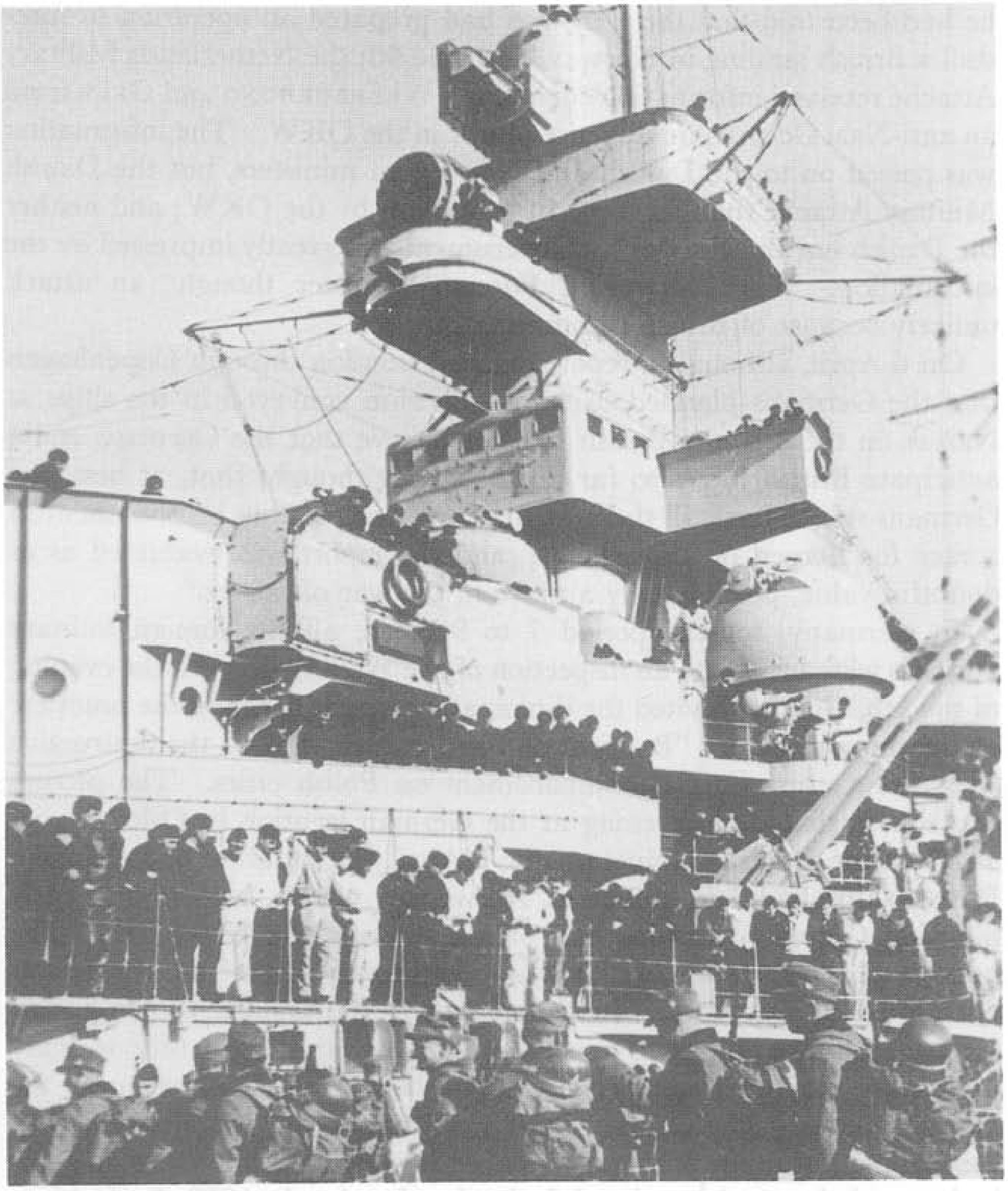
[3] International Military Tribunal, Doc. 3955-NG. Hubatsch, *op. cit.*, pp. 136-38. Derry, *op. cit.*, pp. 22, 28.

[4] Hubatsch, *op. cit.*, pp. 138, 151.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 140.



Mountain troops boarding the cruiser Hipper.

during the night of 5 April on a westerly course. Not much importance was attached to the report; it was assumed that, since nothing further had been heard, the ships had gone through the Kiel Canal into the North Sea. Early on the 8th the British mining of the West Fiord was reported, and at 0700 the French and British Ministers submitted the justificatory notes. After that reports came in from Berlin and Copenhagen that German troop transports and warships of all classes were at sea on a northerly course. At 1400 the British Admiralty informed the Norwegian Minister in London that German ships had been sighted in the North Sea on the 7th and off the Norwegian coast early on the 8th. The Admiralty believed their most likely destination was Narvik, and they could be expected to arrive there shortly before midnight on the 8th. The report reached Oslo at 1900. During the afternoon the ship *Rio de Janeiro* of the 1st Sea Transport Echelon was sunk off Lillesand; and the survivors, many of them in uniform, said they were on the way to Bergen to aid the Norwegians. The Norwegian commanding admiral was not convinced that the transports were actually intended for Norway. Later in the afternoon a sighting of the warships of the Oslo group was reported; yet, by the evening of the 8th the Government had not reached a decision to order mobilization. At 1820 the Norwegian Admiralty Staff ordered increased preparedness of the coastal forts, but mines were only to be laid in the fiords on further orders. The length of time which passed before the danger was taken seriously is indicated by the fact that the chief communications officer of the Norwegian Admiralty Staff was a guest of the German Air Attaché on the night of the 8th and was not called away until 2330. At 0100 on the 9th, orders were given to lay mines on the line Rauöy–Bolarne in the Oslo Fiord, but the order could not be carried out because the German ships had already passed. At 0053 the forts at Rauöy and Bolarne reported that they were in action, and at 0158 a blackout was ordered in Oslo. The Government, meeting in the foreign ministry, at 0230 ordered the mobilization of four divisions and designated 11 April as the first mobilization day.[6]

After the campaign the German Navy assigned an officer to search the records of the Norwegian Admiralty for evidence of collaboration with the British. He found none. He concluded that WESERUEBUNG had taken the Admiralty Staff completely by surprise and that, as far as could be determined, it had received no reports from either Norwegian or foreign sources informing it of the nature or time of the operation. Only two warnings had reached Oslo. The first, on the night of 7 April, came from the pilot station at Kopervik where the German steamer *Skagerrak* had anchored with provision cases marked "Wehrmacht" aboard. The second, on the afternoon of the 8th, was a report that the *Rio de Janeiro* had had 100 German soldiers aboard. Neither aroused any particular concern.[7] This investigation supported observations which the German Naval Attaché made on the scene. On 8 April, as he noted in his diary, he at first believed that the sinking of the *Rio de Janeiro* had given the operation away; but later in the day he observed "reliable signs" that the Admiralty had not been alerted. On the afternoon of the 9th he concluded that neither the Norwegian Government nor the Admiralty knew of the impending invasion until late on the night of 8 April. He had been in constant contact with people who would have known if it had been otherwise.[8]

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[6] *Ibid.*, pp. 153–57. *AOK Norwegen, O. Qu., Qu. 2, Bericht Freg. Kpt. Nieden ueber Durchsicht des beim Norwegischen Admiralstab gefundenen Materials.*

[7] *Ibid.*

[8] *Marineattache Norwegen, Kriegstagebuch, Nov. 39–Mai. 40, 8 and 9 Apr. 40.*

In the German command, tension increased after the departure of the warship echelons. The Naval Staff believed, on the 6th, that, although it could not be expected that the other side was completely in the dark about WESERUEBUNG, there were no definite indications of the Allies' having discerned the German strategic plan and, at least, there was no awareness of the great extent of the operation. Since the Allies appeared about to take steps themselves, they would probably expect the German action to take the form of a counterblow to their own operations. The Naval Staff, nevertheless, believed the greatest haste was necessary and thought that 9 April was the latest possible date for the landings. On the 8th, intercepted radio messages indicated that the British had identified Warship Groups 1 and 2, but it was assumed that the Admiralty would probably expect a breakthrough into the Atlantic by a pocket battleship rather than draw conclusions regarding WESERUEBUNG.[9]

On the morning of the 8th, German Army intelligence reported WESERUEBUNG proceeding according to plan, and the impression was that the enemy as yet knew nothing.[10] The Naval Staff believed the German plans had not yet become known, though it expected the increased traffic through the entrances to the Baltic to attract attention. As the day wore on, tension grew. Early reports disclosed that the ships of the Export Echelon were stalled off the Norwegian coast by inability to obtain pilots; and later in the day, after news of the sinking of the *Rio de Janeiro* arrived, the Naval Staff believed the element of surprise had been lost and engagements were to be expected at all points.[11] But events were to prove that the Germans still had the advantage of their enemies' indecision.

Narvik and Trondheim

At 0300 on 7 April Warship Groups 1 and 2 assembled north of Schillig Roads and at 0510 steamed into the North Sea.[12] At 0950 British reconnaissance aircraft sighted the ships heading north and at 1330 twelve Blenheim bombers attacked but without success. The British reaction was slow. Nearly seven hours had elapsed before Admiral Sir Charles Forbes, Commander in Chief of the Home Fleet, sailed from Scapa with two battleships, a battle cruiser, two cruisers, and ten destroyers. An hour later the 2d Cruiser Squadron (two cruisers and eleven destroyers) left Rosyth to join Forbes. Believing the German ships were attempting a breakout into the Atlantic, the British forces took a northeasterly course, trailing behind the German warship groups—which passed through the Shetlands–Bergen narrows during the night—and leaving the central North Sea uncovered.

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[9] *Naval War Diary,* Vol. 8, pp. 40, 50.

[10] *Halder Diary,* Vol. III, p. 105.

[11] *Naval War Diary,* Vol. 8, pp. 60, 61.

[12] Unless otherwise noted, this section is based on the following: Assmann, *Schicksalsjahre,* pp. 137–44; Assmann, *Campaign in Norway,* pp. 19–24; Derry, *op. cit.,* pp. 25–33; Hubatsch, *op. cit.,* pp. 57–77; and S. W. Roskill, *The War at Sea 1939–1945, Vol. I, The Defensive* (London: H. M. Stationery Office, 1954), pp. 157–67.

During the night the wind increased, making it difficult for the German destroyers to maintain twenty-six knots' speed in the heavy seas and creating a constant danger of collision for the ships traveling in close formation. By the morning of the 8th the force was badly scattered, and contact with several of the destroyers had been lost. At 0900 one of the stragglers, the destroyer *Berndt von Arnim,* met the British destroyer *Glowworm* which had fallen behind the destroyer force assigned to mine the approaches to the West Fiord. The *Glowworm* engaged the *von Arnim* in a running fight that lasted until 1024 when the *Glowworm* sank after ramming the *Hipper,* which had been ordered back to aid the *von Arnim.* The encounter with the *Glowworm* took place at about the latitude of Trondheim, and shortly thereafter the *Hipper* with its four destroyers, was detached to carry out its mission at Trondheim. The *Gneisenau* and the *Scharnhorst* stayed with the remaining ten destroyers about halfway to the West Fiord and then veered off northwestward to provide offshore cover. At 2100, in a heavy gale and with visibility poor, the destroyers reached the mouth of the West Fiord.

On 8 April it began to appear to the British that the Germans had an operation under way against Norway after all; still, the Home Fleet continued to steam northward throughout the day, leaving the way clear for other German warship groups moving up from the south. The battle

[redacted]

LOSSBERG, Bernhard von, Oberst (Colonel); Operations Staff, OKW—1 Sep 39–12 Jan 42; Operations Officer, Army of Norway—12 Jan 42–5 May 44.

LUETJENS, Guenther, Vizeadmiral; Commanding Admiral, Fleet—18 Jun 40–27 May 41.

MACKESY, P. J., Major General; Commanding General of British Troops for Operation WILFRED: Army commanding general in the Narvik area—Apr–5 May 40.

MANNERHEIM, Baron Carl Gustaf, Field Marshal—19 May 33, Marshal of Finland—4 Jun 42; Commander in Chief of the Finnish Army; President of Finland—4 Aug 44–4 Mar 46.

MANSTEIN, Fritz Erich von, Generalfeldmarschall; Commanding General, Eleventh Army—Sep 41–Nov 42.

MARCKS, Erich, Generalmajor; Chief of Staff, Eighteenth Army.

MARSCHALL, Wilhelm, Admiral; Commanding Admiral, Fleet—24 Apr–17 Jun 40.

MIKOYAN, Anastas Ivanovich, People's Commissar for Foreign Trade of the Soviet Union—1938–1949.

MILCH, Erhard, Generaloberst—31 Oct 38; Commanding General, 5th Air Force—12 Apr–10 May 40.

MODEL, Walter, Generaloberst; Commanding General, Army Group North— 31 Jan–31 Mar 44.

MOLOTOV, Vyacheslav Mikhailovich, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union—1939–1949.

PAASIKIVI, Juho Kusti, Chairman of the Finnish delegation for negotiations with the Soviet Union—1939; Chairman of the Finnish peace delegation in Moscow—Mar 40; Finnish Minister in the Soviet Union—Mar 40–Jun 41; President of Finland—6 Mar 46–1 Mar 50.

PELLENGAHR, Richard, General, 196th Infantry Division—Apr–May 40.

POHLMAN, Hartwig, Oberstleutnant (Lieutenant Colonel)—1940; Military Plenipotentiary in Norway—1 Apr 40.

QUISLING, Vidkun, Norwegian politician and official; leader of the Norwegian Nasjonal Samling Party; holder of various offices in the German puppet government of Norway.

RAEDER, Erich Grossadmiral—1 Apr 39; Commander in Chief of the German Navy and Chief, Naval Staff—1 Jun 35–30 Jan 43.

RAMSAY, Henrik, Finnish Minister—Feb 43–Aug 44.

RENDULIC, Lothar, Generaloberst; Commanding General Twentieth Mountain Army—28 Jun 44–15 Jan 45; Armed Forces Commander, Norway—18 Dec 44–15 Jan 45.

RENTHE-FINK, Cecil von, German Minister in Denmark—1936–9 Apr 40; Minister and Plenipotentiary of the German Reich in Denmark—9 Apr 40–1942.

REYNAUD, Paul, President of the French Council of Ministers—Mar-Jun 40; Foreign Minister—Mar-May 40.

RIBBENTROP, Joachim von, German Foreign Minister—4 Feb 38-2 May 45.

RITTER, Karl, Ambassador on special assignment in the German Foreign Ministry—1939-1945.

ROSENBERG, Alfred, Reichsleiter, Head of the Foreign Political Office of the Nazi Party (Aussenpolitisches Amt der NSDAP)—1933-1945.

RUGE, Otto, Generalmajor, Commander in Chief of the Norwegian Army—11 Apr-8 Jun 40.

RYTI, Risto Heikki, President of Finland—Dec 40-1 Aug 44.

SCHEIDT, Hans-Wilhelm, Reichsamtsleiter, Director of the Department for Northern Europe, Foreign Political Office of the Nazi Party.

SCHELL, Adolf von, Generalleutnant; Commanding General, 25th Panzer Division—1 Jan 43-15 Nov 43.

SCHNIEWIND, Otto, Vizeadmiral—1939; Chief of Staff, Naval Staff—22 Aug 39-10 Jan 41.

SCHNURRE, Karl, Minister; Head of Division W IV in the Economic Policy Department of the German Foreign Ministry—1939-1940.

SCHOERNER, Ferdinand, Generalmajor—1 Aug 40, Generalleutnant—15 Jan 42, General der Gebirgstruppe—1 Jun 42; Commanding General, 6th Mountain Division—1 Jun 40-15 Jan 42; Commanding General, Mountain Corps Norway later XIX Mountain Corps—15 Jan 42-23 Oct 43, Commanding General, Army Group North—23 Jul 44-17 Jan 45.

SIILASVUO, H., Kenraalimajuri—1941, Kenraaliluutnantti—1942; Commanding General, Finnish III Corps—Jun 41-Jun 42; commanding general of Finnish troops in northern Finland—Sep 44.

STUMPFF, Hans-Juergen, General der Flieger, Generaloberst—19 Jul 40; Commanding General, Fifth Air Force—11 May 40-5 Nov 43.

TALVELA, Paavo, Kenraalimajuri—1941, Keneraaliluutnanti—1942; Commanding General, Finnish VI Corps—Jun 41-Jan 42; Finnish General at German Headquarters—19 Jan 42-21 Feb 43; Commanding General, Maaselka Front—24 Feb 43-16 Jun 44; Commanding General, Svir Front—16 Jun-18 Jul 44; Finnish General at German Headquarters —Jul-6 Sep 44.

TERBOVEN, Joseph, Reichskommissar for the Occupied Norwegian Territories—24 Apr 40-5 May 45.

TODT, Fritz, Reich Minister for Arms and Munition; Plenipotentiary General for Construction Industry, Four Year Plan.

VELTJENS, Joseph; businessman and lieutenant colonel in the German Air Force who frequently acted as Goering's personal representative in military and economic negotiations.

VOGEL, Emil, Generalleutnant—1 Apr 43, General der Gebirgstruppe—9 Nov 44; Commanding General, XXXVI Mountain Corps—10 Aug 44–8 May 45.

VOROSHILOV, Klimenti, Marshal; Commanding General, Northwest Front—1941.

WARLIMONT, Walter, Colonel—1 Feb 38, Generalmajor—1 Aug 41, General der Artillerie—1 Apr 44; Chief of the National Defense Branch, OKW—1 Sep 39; Deputy Chief of the Armed Forces Operations Staff—1 Jan 42–6 Sep 44.

WEISENBERGER, Karl F., General der Infanterie; Commanding General, XXXVI Mountain Corps—29 Nov 41–10 Aug 44.

WITTING, Rolf, Finnish Foreign Minister—Mar 40–Feb 43.

WOYTASCH, Kurt, Generalmajor; Commanding General, 181st Infantry Division—1940.

ZEITZLER, Kurt, General der Infanterie—24 Sep 42, Generaloberst—1 Feb 44; Chief of the Army General Staff—25 Sep 42–20 Jul 44.

Bibliographical Note

The narrative in this volume is based in the main on German military records in the custody of the National Archives. Unfortunately, many of the documents pertaining to the 1940 Norwegian operation were destroyed in 1942 by a fire in the Potsdam Heeresarchiv. For the succeeding years the records of the field commands—the Army of Norway, the Twentieth Mountain Army, and their subordinate units—are complete and all together total several hundred volumes. It was also possible to assemble substantial numbers of Armed Forces High Command, Army High Command, Navy High Command, and Foreign Ministry documents. Copies of the German naval documents are in the custody of the Director of Naval History, U.S. Navy Department. The Foreign Ministry Documents are in the custody of the U.S. State Department.

In order to come even near adequately exploiting this large and virtually untouched collection of primary source material within the practical limits of time and space, it was necessary to concentrate on the German story. For most of the other nations involved, detailed accounts are available in their official histories: *Krigen Norge 1940* (Norway), *Suomen Sota 1941–1945* (Finland), and T. K. Derry, *The Campaign in Norway* (Great Britain). A number of works by German authors have also appeared. The most substantial of them are Walther Hubatsch, *Die deutsche Besetzung von Daenemark und Norwegen 1940* (Goettingen: "Musterschmidt," 1952); Waldemar Erfurth, *Der finnische Krieg 1941–1944* (Wiesbaden: Limes Verlag, 1950); and Wilhelm Hess, *Eismeerfront 1941* (Heidelberg: Kurt Vowinkel Verlag, 1956).

Glossary

Anti-Comintern Pact	The treaty directed against the Soviet Union and the Communist International concluded by Germany, Italy, and Japan in November 1936.
Arctic Ocean Highway	The road in Finnish Lapland connecting Rovaniemi and Pechenga.
Aufmarschanweisung	Directive for strategic concentration.
Divisionsgruppe (Divisional Group).	A collection of units under a division headquarters but without the normal organization and equipment of an infantry or other type division.
Export Echelon (Ausfuhrstaffel).	German supply ships disguised as merchant ships employed in the invasion of Norway.
Front (Finnish)	One of three "fronts" established in January 1942 on the Maaselkä, the Isthmus of Olonets, and the Isthmus of Karelia.
Front (Soviet)	An army group.
"fortress" battalions (Festungsbataillone)	Battalions, usually made up of older men and limited service men, intended for garrison and guard assignments.
Gauleiter	The territorial leaders of the Nazi Party.
I. G. Farben	German chemical manufacturing concern.
Jaeger brigade	Light infantry brigade.
Kampfgruppe	An *ad hoc* combat team of variable strength.
Karinhall	Goering's mansion near Berlin.
Leads	The channel inside the chain of islands off the Norwegian west coast.
Lufthansa	The German civilian air line.
Marinegruppe (Naval Command Group).	Naval operating command, designated by area of responsibility, such as North, West, Baltic.
motti	Literally "a bundle of sticks." A type of encirclement developed by the Finnish Army for forest warfare.

Murmansk Railroad	The railroad connecting Leningrad and the arctic port of Murmansk completed during World War I. Rebuilt under the Soviet Government and later officially renamed the Kirov Railroad.
National Defense Branch (Abteilung Landesverteidigung) OKW	The staff section of the OKW primarily concerned with war plans.
Nazi-Soviet Pact	The nonaggression treaty between Germany and the Soviet Union signed on 23 August 1939 and its secret protocols.
Nebelwerfer	Rocket projector.
Nikkeli O.Y	Finnish corporation controlling the nickel mines at Pechenga.
Obergruppenfuehrer	An SS rank equivalent to lieutenant general.
OKH (Oberkommando des Heeres)	Army High Command.
OKL (Oberkommando der Luftwaffe)	Air Force High Command.
OKM (Oberkommando der Kriegsmarine)	Navy High Command.
OKW (Oberkommando der Wehrmacht)	Armed Forces High Command.
Panzer	Tank.
Reichsamtsleiter	A German civil service rank.
Reichsfuehrer-SS	Heinrich Himmler's title as chief of the SS.
Reichskommissar	A title given to the chief administrative officers in certain of the German-occupied territories.
Reichsstrasse 50	The road along the northern coast of Norway between Narvik and Kirkenes completed in 1940.
SD (Sicherheitsdienst)	The intelligence service of the SS which in 1944 assumed control of all German foreign intelligence.
SS (Schutzstaffel)	The elite military and police organization of the Nazi Party.
SS-Brigadefuehrer	An SS rank equivalent to brigadier general.
SS-Kampfgruppe	An SS combat organization of approximately divisional size.
Stuka (Sturtzkampfflugzeug).	Dive bomber.

Three Power Pact	The German-Italian-Japanese treaty of alliance concluded in September 1940.
Winter War	The Russo-Finnish conflict November 1939–March 1940.

Code Names

German

BARBAROSSA Invasion of the Soviet Union, 22 June 1941

BIRKE Plan for withdrawal of Twentieth Mountain Army into northern Lapland, 1944

BLAUFUCHS 1 and 2 Transfer of XXXVI Corps forces from Germany and Norway to Finland, June 1941

GELB Invasion of France and the Low Countries, 10 May 1940

HARPUNE Deception staged to divert attention from BARBAROSSA, May–August 1941

HARTMUT Submarine operations in support of WESERUEBUNG, April 1940

IKARUS Proposed occupation of Iceland, June 1940

JUNO Fleet operations off Norway, June 1940

KLABAUTERMANN PT Boat operations on Lake Ladoga, summer 1942

LACHSFANG Proposed German-Finnish operations against Kandalaksha and Belomorsk, summer and fall 1942

NAUMBURG Proposed landing in Lyngen Fiord to relieve Narvik, June 1940

NORDLICHT Projected operations against Leningrad, fall 1942

NORDLICHT Withdrawal of Twentieth Mountain Army from Finland, October 1944–January 1945

PANTHER Position Narva River–Lake Peipus line of field fortifications, constructed in fall 1943

PARKPLATZ Proposed operation against Leningrad, spring 1943

PLATINFUCHS Operations of Mountain Corps Norway, 1941

POLARFUCHS Operations of XXXVI Corps, 1941

POLARFUCHS Code-name used in Soviet accounts of an alleged German plan to invade Sweden in 1943

RENNTIER Standby plan for the occupation of Pechenga, August 1940–June 1941

SILBERFUCHS Operations of Army of Norway and attached Finnish units out of Northern Finland, 1941

TANNE Proposed occupation of Suursaari (TANNE OST) and the Åland Islands (TANNE WEST), 1944

WESERUEBUNG Occupation of Norway and Denmark, 9 April 1940

WESERUEBUNG NORD Operations in Norway, spring 1940

WESERUEBUNG SUED Operations in Denmark, spring 1940

WIESENGRUND Proposed occupation of the Rybatchiy Peninsula, summer 1942

WILDENTE Air-sea landing near Mo, 10 May 1940
ZITRONELLA Spitzbergen raid, 8 September 1943
ZITTADELLE Operation against the Kursk salient in southern Russia, 5 July 1943

Allied

CATHERINE Plan for sending battleships into the Baltic Sea, September 1939
HAMMER Proposed direct operation against Trondheim, April 1940
JUPITER Proposed occupation for Pechenga and Banak, 1942–43
PLAN R 4 Projected occupation of bases in Norway following WILFRED, April 1940
ROYAL MARINE Proposed sowing of fluvial mines in the Rhine River, April 1940
SLEDGEHAMMER Plan for large-scale raids Norway to France in 1942
WILFRED Mining of Norwegian territorial waters, April 1940

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